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SEQUEL
TO THE
ENGLISH READER:
OR,
ELEGANT SELECTIONS
IN PROSE AND POETRY.

Designed
TO IMPROVE
THE HIGHEST CLASS OF LEARNERS IN READING;
TO ESTABLISH
A TASTE FOR JUST AND ACCURATE
COMPOSITION;
AND TO PROMOTE
THE INTERESTS OF PIETY AND VIRTUE.

By LINDLEY MURRAY,
Author of "English Grammar adapted to the different classes of learners," &c.

mg 5383

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INTRODUCTION.

THE “English Reader” has been so favourably received by the public, as to encourage the Compiler to hope, that the present volume will not be deemed unworthy of attention. It pursues the same objects as the former work ; it preserves the same chaste attention to the morals of youth ; its materials are taken from the most correct and elegant writers : and as the pieces are generally more extended, and contain a greater variety of style and composition, it is presumed that it forms a proper “Sequel to the Reader,” and is calculated to improve, both in schools and in private families, the highest class of young readers.

In selecting materials for the poetical part of his work, the Compiler met with few authors, the whole of whose writings were unexceptionable. Some of them have had unguarded moments, in which they

have written what is not proper to come under the notice of youth. He must not therefore be understood as recommending every production of all the poets who have contributed to his selection*. Judicious parents and tutors, who feel the importance of a guarded education, will find it incumbent upon them to select for their children and pupils, such writings, both in prose and poetry, as are proper for their perusal; and young persons will evince their virtue and good sense, by cordially acquiescing in the judgment of those who are deeply interested in their welfare. Perhaps the best reason that can be offered, in favour of poetical selections for the use of young and innocent minds, is, the tendency which they have, when properly made, to preserve the chastity of their sentiments, and the purity of their morals.

In "The Sequel," as well as in "The English Reader," several pieces are introduced, which, in a

* Justice to the authors from whose writings the extracts were made, and regard to the credit of the present work, rendered the insertion of names indispensable.

striking manner, display the beauty and excellence of the Christian Religion. Extracts of this kind, if frequently diffused amongst the elements of literature, would doubtless produce happy effects on the minds of youth, and contribute very materially to counteract, both the open and the secret labours of Infidelity. With these views, the Compiler derived particular satisfaction, in selecting those pieces which are calculated to attach the young mind to a religion perfectly adapted to the condition of man; and which not only furnishes the most rational and sublime enjoyments in this life, but secures complete and permanent felicity hereafter.



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SEQUEL TO
THE ENGLISH READER.

PART I.
PIECES IN PROSE.

CHAPTER I.
NARRATIVE PIECES.

SECTION I.

Naomi and Ruth : A fine example of filial attachment.

THERE are few narratives more interesting, or more sweetly told, than that which is contained in the Book of Ruth. It seems designed, in part, to exhibit to us a lively and high coloured picture of the force of female friendship, on the one hand, and the weakness of resolution, when opposed by custom, on the other. The general circumstances of the narrative being uncommonly fine, will speak best for themselves, and afford proper comments in the progress of reciting them.

When the famine raged with much severity in her native land, Naomi and her husband Elimelech, and their two sons, went to sojourn in the country of Moab : but Elimelech died, and Naomi, the widow, was left with her children. Soon after this, these children

“ took them wives of the women of Maob ; the name of the one was Orpah, and the other Ruth.” It came to pass that the young men, their husbands, died also ; and now the poor widow was bereaved of her sons and her husband. Unable, therefore, to bear any longer a place in which every scene presented some image of lost endearment, or revived some distracting idea of conjugal or maternal tenderness, she resolved to seek solace from her sorrow, by change of residence. So she arose with her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, that she might return from the country of Moab, It presently occurred to the poor woman, as she was journeying on her way, that if she was herself unhappy, it was no testimony of her affection to involve her sons’ wives in equal calamities ; and contemplating the reception she would be likely to meet with in the land of Judah, entering it desolate, unfriended, and unadorned, she paused a moment, and thus pathetically addressed the young widows : “ Go, my children, return to your mother’s house ; the Lord deal kindly with you as you have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant that ye may find rest, each of you, in the house of your dear deceased husband.”— Having uttered this short prayer for their happiness, she kissed them, and prepared to depart alone. How true to nature was their reply ! They did not pour forth unmeaning compliments of condolence ; they did not interchange any idle civilities of sorrow, for their anguish was too sincere for ceremony ; nor did they enter into the parade of promising future interviews, for they spoke not at all. The extreme of grief has, at the first surprise, little to do with language : at the most, it bursts into short exclamations,

as if it would show the impossibility of proceeding. For our alleviation, therefore, in these cases, that power, who to every wound hath provided something wherewith to heal it, gave the comfort of tears, so that the fulness of the sad heart is, in part, discharged by that kindly effusion which Providence has intended as a fountain to relieve the excesses of nature; either in the surplus of misery, or of transport. "They lifted up their voice and wept."—A folio could not so well display their condition. After some time passed in this kind of significant silence, they said unto her: "Surely, we will return with thee unto thy people." Here again genuine grief discovers itself: one tender sentence, and one only, expresses their designs and wishes to attend her. In such cases conciseness is nature, and circumlocution, mere art and affectation.

Perceiving the design of her daughters, Naomi again endeavoured to dissuade them, and to press their speedy return. She painted the various disasters they would be liable to, in her company; told them she had no more sons to give them for husbands; nor even a hut, however cheerless and forlorn, to accommodate them with in her own country: and further, that she had nothing to repose her own head upon, if, after the fatigues of travel, she should haply arrive safe. And now, she once more pressed the women in a farewell embrace, whilst she closed her arguments with another blessing, more melting even than the first.—"Nay, my daughters, weep not I entreat you. It grieveth me more for your sakes than my own, that the hand of the Lord hath gone out against me."—This was the touchstone. She had now fairly discovered all the horrors of her situation, and showed

herself a woman without accommodation ; a traveller without hope of rest at the end of her journey, and a widow, without one to take her by the hand, and say unto her, welcome unfortunate, welcome again to thine own country. The picture was too darkly shaded for Orpah. The dread of poverty, and all its sable catalogue of terrors, struck her at once. She shed the tribute of a few more tears ; sacrificed a few more sighs, and went her way. Not so the affectionate Ruth. How excellently marked, and that, by a single word, is the conduct of each. “ Orpah *kissed* her mother-in-law ; but Ruth *clave* unto her.” In vain did the noble-minded Naomi exhibit to this faithful creature the various miseries which were at hand, and against which there was no comfortable provision. In vain did she point to the example, the politic and prudent example of Orpah, *her sister*. In scorn of such conduct, and to close at once all future dissuasions, she thus declared, to the honour of her sex, the glowing resolutions of her soul : “ Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee ; for whither thou goest, I will go ; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge : thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” The whole of the beauty and force of this passage is not seen at once : it is a very fine climax, and there is great elegance in the gradations.

“ When Naomi saw that she was steadfastly minded to go, she left off persuading her. So they went until they came to Bethlehem. And when they arrived, it came to pass, that all the city were moved about them ; and they said, “ Is this Naomi ? ” Here are fresh morals, and fresh elegancies, opened upon us. The

disconsolate Naomi had no sooner set her foot upon her own land, than many of those little passions, which lie lurking in the bosom of the illiberal and the inhospitable, were instantly awakened. She probably soon found, that to rely on the kindness of former intimates, was but a precarious confidence: for it is not bearing too hard, I fear, upon human nature, to suppose, that the companions of her early life, would give with an ill grace, if they gave at all, that pillow, or that bread, of which, after so wearisome a journey, she certainly stood much in need. Ill used by the world, she began to lose the hope of such resources. The benevolence of distant relations, in whose memory she might be able to revive the images of tenderness, was perhaps a fond idea, that was born and buried almost in the same instant. Nothing of comfort seemed to remain in reserve, till the excellent Ruth, the faithful partner of her sufferings, suggested an expedient. And she said unto Naomi, "Let me now therefore go and glean ears of corn, after him in whose sight I may find grace." As if she had said, I perceive that our conveniences must depend upon ourselves, and that we must owe our daily bread, to our daily labour. As it is now the beginning of harvest, behold, the opportunity of exerting ourselves is at hand. Thou, indeed, art too much afflicted to toil: but for my part, I am in the prime of youth, and tenderly sympathizing with thee, I am able and willing to gather something from the field.

"Now it was so, that Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz." And it happened as Ruth was gleaning after the reapers, she

came to a part of the field belonging to Boaz. This circumstance occasioned a wonderful and happy change of condition. For Boaz coming to take a view of his reapers, and perceiving the stranger, said to the servant who was set over the reapers, "Whose damsel is this?" The servants's answer is penned with the most natural simplicity. "It is the Moabitish damsel, that came back with Naomi, out of the country of Moab. And she said, I pray you let me glean, and gather, after the reapers among the sheaves. So she came, and hath continued amongst us even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house;" Something there was, either in this account, or in the appearance of the object, which won much upon the favour of the landlord; for it is surely a softer voice, even than the voice of hospitality, that speaks in the sequel. "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in any other field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens." I have given particular injunctions to "the young men that they shall not touch thee. And when thou art athirst, go to the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn." Here began the first fruits of her fidelity; and the partiality of Boaz made a very rapid progress, for in his second address he was more benevolent than in the first. He invited her to consider herself as one of his own people, "to eat of the bread, to dip her morsel in the vinegar" at meal times, and to sit cheerfully beside the reapers. Nay more, with his own hand,—surely the heart extended it,—"he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed and left." Now it was that Boaz began to discover more evidently, that the spring of this gene-

rous current lay very near the heart. When she was risen up to glean after her repast, he commanded the young men to show her all possible marks of courtesy and distinction. His strict orders were, not to suffer her to gather the scanty pittance, ear by ear, after the cautious rake had gone over the ground, but to let her glean unquestioned, even amongst the sheaves. Nay more, they were to let some handfuls fall on purpose for her, and leave them for her particular gleaning. And indeed, such was the successful consequence of these indulgences, that after she had beaten out what she had been permitted to glean in one single day, "it was about an ephah of barley." This, the kind creature carried with all the expedition of affection to her friend. And when Naomi saw it, when the soul of the sorrowful widow sung for joy, then Ruth related to her the whole history of her good fortune, and concluded by observing, that the name of the hospitable owner of the land was Boaz. This intelligence revived her spirits like a cordial; and she exclaims with the most animated transport: "the man is near a-kin to us," my beloved Ruth, "one of our next kinsmen."

Often, and with equal success, she went after this into the field; and continued there to earn a very comfortable living for herself and her friend, even to the close of the harvest. In the meantime, the regard of Boaz had made a very pathetic progress; and the result of it was, that he became the honourable suitor of our fair gleaner, and renewed his acquaintance with his relation Naomi. Boaz and Ruth were soon united; and, as a convincing instance of the harmony in which the family lived together, we find, highly to the gratification of every feeling heart, that when Ruth pre-

sented to Boaz a child, her first born,—Naomi, after all the perils of her past life, re-enjoyed the sweets of privacy and peace: “for she took the babe, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.” And I must not forget to add, that this very child, whose name was Obed, was the grandfather of David, the celebrated monarch of Israel. C. MELMOTH.

SECTION II.

The instability of human grandeur exemplified in the fall of Cardinal Wolsey.

CARDINAL WOLSEY, the favourite of Henry VIII. was the most absolute and wealthy minister of state that England ever saw. In his rise and fall, he was the greatest instance which many ages had produced, of the mutability of human affairs.

When the intrigues of his enemies had weakened the king's attachment, the meditated blow was for a time suspended, and fell not suddenly on the Cardinal's head. The king, who probably could not justify, by any good reason, his alienation from his ancient favourite, seems to have remained some time in doubt; and he received him, if not with all his former kindness, at least with the appearance of trust and regard. But constant experience evinces how rarely high confidence and affection receive the least diminution, without sinking into absolute indifference, or even running into the opposite extreme. The king was at length determined to bring on the ruin of the Cardinal, with a motion almost as precipitate as he had

formerly employed in his elevation. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk were sent to require the great seal from him; and on his scrupling to deliver it, without a more exprefs warrant, Henry wrote him a letter, upon which it was surrendered; and it was delivered by the king to Sir Thomas More, a man who, besides the ornámets of an elegant literature, possessed the highest virtue, integrity, and capacity.

Wolsey was ordered to depart from York-Place, a palace which he had built in London; and which, though it really belonged to the See of York, was seized by Henry; and became afterwards the residence of the kings of England, by the title of Whitehall. All his furniture and plate were also seized; their riches and splendour befitted rather a royal than a private fortune. The walls of his palace were covered with cloth of gold, or cloth of silver. He had a cupboard of plate of massy gold. There were found a thousand pieces of fine Holland belonging to him. The rest of his riches and furniture was in proportion; and his opulence was, probably, no small inducement to this violent persecution.

The Cardinal was ordered to retire to Asher, a country-seat which he possessed near Hampton-Court. The world that had paid him such abject court during his prosperity, now entirely deserted him on this fatal reverse of all his fortunes. He himself was much dejected with the change; and from the same turn of mind which had made him be so vainly elated with his grandeur, he felt the stroke of adversity with double rigour. The smallest appearance of his return to favour, threw him into transports of joy unbecoming a man. The king had seemed willing, during some

time to intermit the blows which overwhelmed him. He granted him his protection, and left him in possession of the Sees of York and Winchester. He even sent him a gracious message, accompanied with a ring, as a testimony of his affection. Wolsey, who was on horseback when the messenger met him, immediately alighted; and throwing himself on his knees in the mire, received, in that humble attitude, these marks of his majesty's gracious disposition towards him. But his enemies, who dreaded his return to court, never ceased plying the king with accounts of his several offences. He dismissed, therefore, his numerous retinue; and as he was a kind and beneficent master, the separation passed not without a plentiful effusion of tears on both sides. The king's heart, notwithstanding some gleams of kindness, seemed now totally hardened against his old favourite. He ordered him to be indicted in the Star Chamber, where a sentence was passed against him. And, not content with this severity, he abandoned him to all the rigour of the parliament.

After Wolsey had remained some time at Ather, he was allowed to remove to Richmond, a palace which he had received as a present from Henry, in return for Hampton-Court. But the courtiers, dreading still his vicinity to the king, procured an order for him to remove to his See of York. The Cardinal knew it was in vain to resist. He took up his residence at Cawood in Yorkshire, where he rendered himself extremely popular in the neighbourhood, by his affability and hospitality; but he was not allowed to remain long unmolested in this retreat. The earl of Northumberland received orders, without regard to Wolsey's ecclesiastical character, to arrest him for high

treason, and to conduct him to London, in order to his trial. The Cardinal, partly from the fatigues of his journey, partly from the agitation of his anxious mind, was seized with a disorder which turned into a dysentery; and he was able, with some difficulty, to reach Leicester-Abbey. When the abbot and the monks advanced to receive him with much respect and reverence, he told them that he was come to lay his bones among them; and he immediately took to his bed, when he never rose more. A little before he expired, he addressed himself in the following words to Sir William Kingston, constable of the Tower, who had him in custody: "I pray you have me heartily recommended to his royal majesty; and beseech him, on my behalf, to call to his remembrance all matters that have passed between us from the beginning, especially with regard to his business with the queen; and then will he know in his conscience whether I have offended him. He is a prince of a most royal carriage, and hath a princely heart; but rather than he will miss or want any part of his desire, he will endanger the one half of his kingdom. I do assure you, that I have often kneeled before him, sometimes three hours together, to persuade him from his will and appetite; but could not prevail. Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs. But this is the just reward that I must receive for my indulgent pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only to my prince."

Thus died this famous cardinal, whose character seems to have contained as singular a variety as the

fortune to which he was exposed. The obstinacy and violence of the king's temper may alleviate much of the blame which some of his favourite's measures have undergone; and when we consider, that the subsequent part of Henry's reign was much more criminal than that which had been directed by Wolsey's counsels, we shall be inclined to suspect those historians of partiality, who have endeavoured to load the memory of this minister with such violent reproaches. Henry much regretted his death, when informed of it; and always spoke favourably of his memory: a proof that humour more than reason, or any discovery of treachery, had occasioned the last persecutions against him.

HUME.

SECTION III.

Religion the foundation of content: an allegory.

OMAR, the hermit of the mountain Aubukabis, which rises on the east of Mecca, and overlooks the city, found one evening a man sitting pensive and alone, within a few paces of his cell. Omar regarded him with attention, and perceived that his looks were wild and haggard, and that his body was feeble and emaciated. The man also seemed to gaze steadfastly on Omar; but such was the abstraction of his mind, that his eye did not immediately take cognizance of its object. In the moment of recollection, he started as from a dream; he covered his face in confusion: and bowed himself to the ground. "Son of affliction," said Omar, "who art thou, and what is thy distress?" "My name," replied the stranger, "is Hassan, and I am a native of this city. The angel of adversity has laid his

hand upon me, and the wretch whom thine eye compassionates, thou canst not deliver." "To deliver thee," said Omar, "belongs to Him only, from whom we should receive with humility both good and evil: yet hide not thy life from me; for the burden which I cannot remove, I may at least enable thee to sustain." Hassan fixed his eyes upon the ground, and remained some time silent; then fetching a deep sigh, he looked up at the hermit, and thus complied with his request.

"It is now six years since our mighty lord the Caliph Almalic, whose memory be blessed, first came privately to worship in the temple of the holy city. The blessing which he petitioned of the prophet, as the prophet's vicegerent, he was diligent to dispense. In the intervals of his devotion, therefore, he went about the city relieving distress, and restraining oppression: the widow smiled under his protection, and the weakness of age and infancy was sustained by his bounty. I, who dreaded no evil but sickness, and expected no good beyond the reward of my labour, was singing at my work when Almalic entered my dwelling. He looked round with a smile of complacency; perceiving that though it was mean, it was neat; and though I was poor, I appeared to be content. As his habit was that of a pilgrim, I hastened to receive him with such hospitality as was in my power; and my cheerfulness was rather increased than restrained by his presence. After he had accepted some coffee, he asked me many questions; and though by my answers I always endeavoured to excite him to mirth, yet I perceived that he grew thoughtful, and eyed me with a placid but fixed attention. I suspected that he had some knowledge of me, and therefore inquired his country and his name.

Hassan," said he, "I have raised thy curiosity, and it shall be satisfied; he who now talks with thee, is Almalic, the sovereign of the faithful, whose seat is the throne of Medina, and whose commission is from above." These words struck me dumb with astonishment, though I had some doubt of their truth: but Almalic throwing back his garment discovered the peculiarity of his vest, and put the royal signet upon his finger. I then started up, and was about to prostrate myself before him, but he prevented me: "Hassan," said he, "forbear: thou art greater than I, and from thee I have at once derived humility and wisdom." I answered, "Mock not thy servant, who is but a worm before thee: life and death are in thy hand, and happiness and misery are the daughters of thy will." "Hassan," he replied, "I can no otherwise give life and happiness, than by not taking them away: thou art thyself beyond the reach of my bounty; and possessed of felicity which I can neither communicate nor obtain. My influence over others fills my bosom with perpetual solicitude and anxiety; and yet my influence over others extends only to their vices, whether I would reward or punish. By the bow-string, I can repress violence and fraud: and by the delegation of power, I can transfer the insatiable wishes of avarice and ambition from one object to another: but with respect to virtue, I am impotent; if I could reward it, I would reward it in thee. Thou art content, and hast therefore neither avarice nor ambition. To exalt thee, would destroy the simplicity of thy life, and diminish that happiness which I have no power either to increase or to continue."

He then rose up, and commanding me not to disclose his secret, departed.

As soon as I recovered from the confusion and astonishment in which the Caliph left me, I began to regret that my behaviour had intercepted his bounty ; and accused that cheerfulness of folly, which was the concomitant of poverty and labour. I now repined at the obscurity of my station, which my former insensibility had perpetuated. I neglected my labour, because I despised the reward ; I spent the day in idleness, forming romantic projects to recover the advantages which I had lost : and at night, instead of losing myself in that sweet and refreshing sleep, from which I used to rise with new health, cheerfulness, and vigour, I dreamed of splendid habits and a numerous retinue, of gardens, palaces, feasting and pleasures ; and waked only to regret the illusions that had vanished. My health was at length impaired by the inquietude of my mind ; I sold all my moveables for subsistence ; and reserved only a mattress, upon which I sometimes lay from one night to another.

In the first moon of the following year, the Caliph came again to Mecca, with the same secrecy, and for the same purposes. He was willing once more to see the man, whom he considered as deriving felicity from himself. But he found me, not singing at my work, ruddy with health, vivid with cheerfulness ; but pale and dejected, sitting on the ground, and chewing opium, which contributed to substitute the phantoms of imagination for the realities of greatness. He entered with a kind of joyful impatience in his countenance, which, the moment he beheld me, was changed to a mixture of wonder and pity. I had often wished for another opportunity to address the Caliph ; yet I was confounded at his presence, and, throwing myself at

his feet, I laid my hand upon my head, and was speechless. "Hassan," said he, "what canst thou have lost, whose wealth was the labour of thine own hand; and what can have made thee sad, the spring of whose joy was in thy own bosom? What evil hath befallen thee? Speak, and if I can remove it, thou art happy." I was now encouraged to look up, and I replied, "Let my Lord forgive the presumption of his servant, who rather than utter a falsehood, would be dumb for ever. I am become wretched by the loss of that which I never possessed. Thou hast raised wishes, which indeed I am not worthy thou shouldst satisfy; but why should it be thought, that he who was happy in obscurity and indigence, would not have been rendered more happy by eminence and wealth?"

When I had finished this speech, Aimalic stood some moments in suspense, and I continued prostrate before him. "Hassan," said he, "I perceive, not with indignation but regret, that I mistook thy character. I now discover avarice and ambition in thy heart, which lay torpid only because their objects were too remote to rouse them. I cannot therefore invest thee with authority, because I would not subject my people to oppression; and because I would not be compelled to punish thee for crimes which I first enabled thee to commit. But as I have taken from thee that which I cannot restore, I will at least gratify the wishes that I excited, lest thy heart accuse me of injustice, and thou continue still a stranger to thyself. Arise, therefore, and follow me."—I sprung from the ground as it were with the wings of an eagle; I kissed the hem of his garment in an ecstasy of gratitude and joy; and when I went out of my house, my heart leaped as if I had

escaped from the den of a lion. I followed Almalic to the caravanfary in which he lodged ; and after he had fulfilled his vows, he took me with him to Medina. He gave me an apartment in the feraglio ; I was attended by his own servants ; my provisions were sent from his own table ; I received every week a sum from his treasury, which exceeded the most romantic of my expectations. But I soon discovered, that no dainty was so tasteful, as the food to which labour procured an appetite ; no slumbers so sweet, as those which weariness invited ; and no time so well enjoyed, as that in which diligence is expecting its reward. I remembered these enjoyments with regret ; and while I was fighting in the midst of superfluities, which though they encumbered life, yet I could not give up, they were suddenly taken away. Almalic, in the midst of the glory of his kingdom, and in the full vigour of his life, expired suddenly in the bath ; such thou knowest was the destiny which the Almighty had written upon his head.

His son Aububekir, who succeeded to the throne, was incensed against me, by some who regarded me at once with contempt and envy. He suddenly withdrew my pension, and commanded that I should be expelled the palace ; a command which my enemies executed with so much rigour, that within twelve hours I found myself in the streets of Medina, indigent and friendless, exposed to hunger and derision, with all the habits of luxury, and all the sensibility of pride. O ! let not thy heart despise me, thou whom experience has not taught, that it is misery to lose that which it is not happiness to possess. O ! that for me this lesson had not been written on the tablets of Providence ! I

have travelled from Medina to Mecca ; but I cannot fly from myself. How different are the states in which I have been placed ! The remembrance of both is bitter : for the pleasures of neither can return.—Hassan having thus ended his story, smote his hands together ; and looking upward, burst into tears.

Omar having waited till this agony was past, went to him, and taking him by the hand, “ My son,” said he, “ more is yet in thy power than Almalic could give, or Aububekir take away. The lesson of thy life the prophet has in mercy appointed me to explain.

“ Thou wast once content with poverty and labour, only because they were become habitual, and ease and affluence were placed beyond thy hope ; for when ease and affluence approached thee, thou wast content with poverty and labour no more. That which then became the object, was also the bound of thy hope ; and he, whose utmost hope is disappointed, must inevitably be wretched. If thy supreme desire had been the delights of paradise, and thou hadst believed that by the tenour of thy life these delights had been secured, as more could not have been given thee, thou wouldst not have regretted that less was not offered. The content which was once enjoyed, was but the lethargy of soul ; and the distress which is now suffered, will but quicken it to action. Depart, therefore, and be thankful for all things ; put thy trust in Him, who alone can gratify the wish of reason, and satisfy thy soul with good ; fix thy hope upon that portion, in comparison of which the world is as the drop of the bucket, and the dust of the balance. Return, my son, to thy labour ; thy food shall be again tasteful, and thy rest shall be sweet ; to thy content also will be added stability, when it de-

pende not upon that which is possessed upon earth, but upon that which is expected in heaven."

Hassan, upon whose mind the angel of instruction impressed the counsel of Omar, hastened to prostrate himself in the temple of the Prophet. Peace dawned upon his mind like the radiance of the morning: he returned to his labour with cheerfulness; his devotion became fervent and habitual; and the latter days of Hassan were happier than the first.

DR. JOHNSON.

SECTION IV.

No life pleasing to God, but that which is useful to mankind. An eastern narrative.

It pleased our mighty sovereign Abbas Carascan, from whom the kings of the earth derive honour and dominion, to set Mirza his seryant over the province of Tauris. In the hand of Mirza, the balance of distribution was suspended with impartiality; and under his administration the weak were protected, the learned received honour, and the diligent became rich: Mirza, therefore, was beheld by every eye with complacency, and every tongue pronounced blessings upon his head. But it was observed that he derived no joy from the benefits which he diffused: he became pensive and melancholy; he spent his leisure in solitude; in his palace he sat motionless upon a sofa; and when he went out, his walk was slow, and his eyes were fixed upon the ground: he applied to the business of state with reluctance; and resolved to relinquish the toil of government, of which he could no longer enjoy the reward.

He, therefore, obtained permission to approach the throne of our sovereign ; and being asked what was his request, he made this reply : “ May the Lord of the world forgive the slave whom he has honoured, if Mirza presume again to lay the bounty of Abbas at his feet. Thou hast given me the dominion of a country, fruitful as the gardens of Damascus ; and a city glorious above all others, except that only which reflects the splendour of thy presence. But the longest life is a period scarcely sufficient to prepare for death. All other business is vain and trivial, as the toil of emmets in the path of the traveller, under whose feet they perish for ever : and all enjoyment is unsubstantial and evanescent, as the colours of the bow that appears in the interval of a storm. Suffer me, therefore, to prepare for the approach of eternity ; let me give up my soul to meditation ; let solitude and silence acquaint me with the mysteries of devotion ; let me forget the world, and by the world be forgotten, till the moment arrives in which the veil of eternity shall fall, and I shall be found at the bar of the Almighty.” Mirza then bowed himself to the earth, and stood silent.

By the command of Abbas it is recorded, that at these words he trembled upon the throne, at the footstool of which the world pays homage ; he looked round upon his nobles ; but every countenance was pale, and every eye was upon the earth. No man opened his mouth ; and the king first broke silence, after it had continued near an hour.

“ Mirza, terror and doubt are come upon me. I am alarmed as a man who suddenly perceives that he is near the brink of a precipice, and is urged forward by

an irresistible force : but yet I know not whether my danger is a reality or a dream. I am as thou art, a reptile of the earth : my life is a moment, and eternity, in which days, and years, and ages, are nothing, eternity is before me, for which I also should prepare : but by whom then must the faithful be governed ? By those only, who have no fear of judgment ? by those only, whose life is brutal, because like brutes they do not consider that they shall die ? Or who, indeed, are the faithful ? Are the busy multitudes that crowd the city, in a state of perdition ? and is the cell of the Dervise alone the gate of Paradise ? To all, the life of a Dervise is not possible : to all, therefore, it cannot be a duty. Depart to the house which has in this city been prepared for thy residence : I will meditate the reason of thy request ; and may He who illuminates the mind of the humble, enable me to determine with wisdom."

Mirza departed, and on the third day, having received no command, he again requested an audience, and it was granted. When he entered the royal presence, his countenance appeared more cheerful ; he drew a letter from his bosom, and having kissed it, he presented it with his right hand, " My Lord !" said he, " I have learned by this letter, which I received from Cofrou the Iman, who stands now before thee, in what manner life may be best improved. I am enabled to look back with pleasure, and forward with hope ; and I shall now rejoice still to be the shadow of thy power at Tauris, and to keep those honours which I so lately wished to resign." The king, who had listened to Mirza with a mixture of surprise and curiosity, immediately gave the letter to Cofrou, and commanded

that it should be read. The eyes of the court were at once turned upon the hoary sage, whose countenance was suffused with an honest blush ; and it was not without some hesitation that he read these words.

“ To Mirza, whom the wisdom of Abbas our mighty lord has honoured with dominion, be perpetual health ! When I heard thy purpose to withdraw the blessings of thy government from the thousands of Tauris, my heart was wounded with the arrow of affliction, and my eyes became dim with sorrow. But who shall speak before the king when he is troubled ; and who shall boast of knowledge, when he is distressed by doubt ? To thee will I relate the events of my youth, which thou hast renewed before me ; and those truths which they taught me, may the prophet multiply to thee !

Under the instruction of the physician Aluzar, I obtained an early knowledge of his art. To those who were smitten with disease, I could administer plants, which the sun has impregnated with the spirit of health. But the scenes of pain, languor, and mortality, which were perpetually rising before me, made me often tremble for myself. I saw the grave open at my feet : I determined, therefore, to contemplate only the regions beyond it, and to despise every acquisition which I could not keep. I conceived an opinion, that as there was no merit but in voluntary poverty, and silent meditation, those who desired money were not proper objects of bounty ; and that by all who were proper objects of bounty money was despised. I therefore, buried mine in the earth ; and renouncing society, I wandered into a wild and sequestered part of the country. My dwelling was a cave by the side of a

hill. I drank the running water from the spring, and eat such fruits and herbs as I could find. To increase the austerity of my life, I frequently watched all night, sitting at the entrance of the cave with my face to the east, resigning myself to the secret influences of the Prophet. One morning after my nocturnal vigil, just as I perceived the horizon glow at the approach of the sun, the power of sleep became irresistible, and I sunk under it. I imagined myself still sitting at the entrance of my cell; that the dawn increased; and that as I looked earnestly for the first beam of day, a dark spot appeared to intercept it. I perceived that it was in motion; it increased in size as it drew near, and at length I discovered it to be an eagle. I still kept my eye fixed steadfastly upon it, and saw it alight at a small distance, where I now descried a fox whose two fore-legs appeared to be broken. Before this fox the eagle laid part of a kid, which she had brought in her talons, and then disappeared. When I awaked, I laid my forehead upon the ground, and blessed the Prophet for the instruction of the morning. I reviewed my dream, and said thus to myself, Cosrou, thou hast done well to renounce the tumult, the business, and vanities of life: but thou hast as yet only done it in part; thou art still every day busied in the search of food; thy mind is not wholly at rest; neither is thy trust in Providence complete. What art thou taught by this vision? If thou hast seen an eagle commissioned by Heaven to feed a fox that is lame, shall not the hand of Heaven also supply thee with food, when that which prevents thee from procuring it for thyself, is not necessity, but devotion? I was now so confident of a miraculous supply, that I neglected to walk out for

my repast, which, after the first day, I expected with an impatience that left me little power of attending to any other object. This impatience, however, I laboured to suppress, and persisted in my resolution: but my eyes at length began to fail me, and my knees smote each other; I threw myself backward, and hoped my weakness would soon increase to insensibility. But I was suddenly roused by the voice of an invisible being who pronounced these words: ‘Cofrou, I am the angel, who, by the command of the Almighty, have registered the thoughts of thy heart, which I am now commissioned to reprove. While thou wast attempting to become wise above that which is revealed, thy folly has perverted the instruction which was vouchsafed thee. Art thou disabled as the fox? hast thou not rather the powers of the eagle? Arise, let the eagle be the object of thy emulation. To pain and sickness, be thou again the messenger of ease and health. Virtue is not rest, but action. If thou dost good to man as an evidence of thy love to God, thy virtue will be exalted from moral to divine; and that happiness which is the pledge of paradise, will be thy reward upon earth.’

“At these words I was not less astonished than if a mountain had been overturned at my feet. I humbled myself in the dust, I returned to the city; I dug up my treasure; I was liberal, yet I became rich. My skill in restoring health to the body, gave me frequent opportunities of curing the diseases of the soul. I grew eminent beyond my merit; and it was the pleasure of the king that I should stand before him. Now, therefore, be not offended; I boast of no knowledge that I have not received. As the sands of the desert drink

up the drops of rain, or the dew of the morning, so do I also, who am but dust, imbibe the instructions of the Prophet. Believe then that it is he who tells thee, all knowledge is profane, which terminates in thyself; and by a life wasted in speculation, little even of this can be gained. When the gates of paradise are thrown open before thee, thy mind shall be irradiated in a moment. Here, thou canst do little more than pile error upon error: there, thou shalt build truth upon truth. Wait, therefore, for the glorious vision; and in the mean time emulate the eagle. Much is in thy power; and, therefore, much is expected of thee. Though the Almighty only can give virtue, yet, as a prince, thou mayst stimulate those to beneficence, who act from no higher motive than immediate interest: thou canst not produce the principle, but mayst enforce the practice. Let thy virtue be thus diffused; and if thou believest with reverence, thou shalt be accepted above. Farewell! May the smile of Him who resides in the heaven of heavens be upon thee! and against thy name, in the volume of His will, may happiness be written."

The king, whose doubts, like those of Mirza, were now removed, looked up with a smile that communicated the joy of his mind. He dismissed the prince to his government; and commanded these events to be recorded, to the end that posterity may know, "that no life is pleasing to God, but that which is useful to mankind."

CHAPTER II.

DIDACTIC PIECES.

SECTION I.

Vicious connexions the ruin of Virtue.

AMONG the numerous causes which introduce corruption into the heart, and accelerate its growth, none is more unhappily powerful than the contagion which is diffused by bad examples, and heightened by particular connexions with persons of loose principles, or dissolute morals. This, in a licentious state of society, is the most common source of those vices and disorders which so much abound in great cities; and often proves, in a particular manner, fatal to the young; even to them whose beginnings were once auspicious and promising. It may therefore be a useful employment of attention, to trace the progress of this principle of corruption; to examine the means by which "evil communications" gradually undermine, and at last destroy "good morals." It is indeed disagreeable to contemplate human nature, in this downward course of its progress. But it is always profitable to know our own infirmities and dangers.

As certain virtuous principles are still inherent in human nature, there are few who set out at first in the world without good dispositions. The warmth which belongs to youth naturally exerts itself in generous feelings, and sentiments of honour; in strong attachment to friends, and the other emotions of a kind and

tender heart. Almost all the plans with which persons who have been liberally educated begin the world, are connected with honourable views. At that period, they repudiate whatever is mean or base. It is pleasing to them to think of commanding the esteem of those among whom they live, and of acquiring a name among men. But alas ! how soon does this flattering prospect begin to be overcast ! Desires of pleasure usher in temptation, and forward the growth of disorderly passions. Ministers of vice are seldom wanting to encourage and flatter the passions of the young. Inferiors study to creep into favour, by servile obsequiousness to all their desires and humours. Glad to find any apology for the indulgences of which they are fond, the young too readily listen to the voice of those who suggest to them, that strict notions of religion, order, and virtue, are old fashioned and illiberal ; that the restraints which they impose are only fit to be prescribed to those who are in the first stage of pupillage ; or to be preached to the vulgar, who ought to be kept within the closest bounds of regularity and subjection. But the goodness of their hearts, it is insinuated to them, and the liberality of their views, will fully justify their emancipating themselves, in some degree, from the rigid discipline of parents and teachers.

Soothing as such insinuations are to the youthful and inconsiderate, their first steps, however, in vice, are cautious and timid, and occasionally checked by remorse. As they begin to mingle more in the world, and emerge into the circles of gaiety and pleasure, finding these loose ideas countenanced by too general practice, they gradually become bolder in the liberties they take. If they have been bred to business, they

begin to tire of industry, and look with contempt on the plodding race of citizens. If they are of superior rank, they think it becomes them to resemble their equals: to assume that freedom of behaviour, that air of forwardness, that tone of dissipation, that easy negligence of those with whom they converse, which appear fashionable in high life. If affluence of fortune unhappily concurs to favour their inclinations, amusements and diversions succeed in a perpetual round; night and day are confounded; gaming fills up their vacant intervals; they live wholly in public places; they run into many degrees of excess, disagreeable, even to themselves, merely from weak complaisance, and the fear of being ridiculed by their loose associates. Among these associates, the most hardened and determined always take the lead. The rest follow them with implicit submission; and make proficiency in this school of iniquity, in exact proportion to the weakness of their understandings, and the strength of their passions.

How many pass away, after this manner, some of the most valuable years of their life, tost in a whirlpool of what cannot be called pleasure, so much as mere giddiness and folly! In the habits of perpetual connexion with idle or licentious company, all reflection is lost; while, circulated from one empty head, and one thoughtless heart, to another, folly shoots up into all its most ridiculous forms; prompts the extravagant, unmeaning frolic in private; or sallies forth in public into mad riot; impelled sometimes by intoxication, sometimes by mere levity of spirits.

All the while, amidst this whole course of juvenile infatuation, I readily admit, that much good nature

may still remain. Generosity and attachments may be found ; nay, some awe of religion may still subsist, and some remains of those good impressions which were made upon the mind in early days. It might yet be very possible to reclaim such persons, and to form them for useful and respectable stations in the world, if virtuous and improving society should happily succeed to the place of that idle crew, with whom they now associate ; if important business should occur, to bring them into a different sphere of action ; or, if some seasonable stroke of affliction should in mercy be sent, to recall them to themselves, and to awaken serious and manly thought. But, if youth and vigour, and flowing fortune continue ; if a similar succession of companions go on to amuse them, to ingross their time, and to stir up their passions ; the day of ruin,—let them take heed, and beware !—the day of irrecoverable ruin, begins to draw nigh. Fortune is squandered ; health is broken ; friends are offended, affronted, estranged ; aged parents, perhaps, sent afflicted and mourning to the dust.

There are certain degrees of vice which are chiefly stamped with the character of the ridiculous, and the contemptible : and there are also certain limits, beyond which if it pass, it becomes odious and detestable. If, to other corruptions which the heart has already received, be added the infusion of sceptical principles, that worst of all the “evil communications” of sinners, the whole of morals is then on the point of being overthrown. For, every crime can then be palliated to conscience ; every check and restraint which had hitherto remained, is taken away. He who, in the beginning of his course, soothed himself with the

thought, that while he indulged his desires, he did hurt to no man ; now, pressed by the necessity of supplying those wants into which his expensive pleasures have brought him, goes on without remorse to defraud, and to oppress. The lover of pleasure, now becomes hardened and cruel ; violates his trust, or betrays his friend ; becomes a man of treachery, or a man of blood ; satisfying, or at least endeavouring all the while to satisfy himself, that circumstances form his excuse ; that by necessity he is impelled ; and that, in gratifying the passions which nature had implanted within him, he does no more than follow nature.

Miserable and deluded man ! to what art thou come at the last ? Dost thou pretend to follow nature, when thou art contemning the laws of the God of nature ? when thou art stifling his voice within thee, which remonstrates against thy crimes ? when thou art violating the best part of thy nature, by counteracting the dictates of justice and humanity ? Dost thou follow nature, when thou renderest thyself a useless animal on the earth ; and not useless only, but noxious to the society to which thou belongest, and to which thou art a disgrace ; noxious, by the bad example thou hast set ; noxious, by the crimes thou hast committed ; sacrificing innocence to thy guilty pleasures, and introducing shame and ruin into the habitation of peace ; defrauding of their due the unsuspecting who have trusted thee ; involving in the ruins of thy fortune many a worthy family ; reducing the industrious and the aged to misery and want ; by all which, if thou hast escaped the deserved sword of justice, thou hast at least brought on thyself the resentment, and the reproach of all the respectable and the worthy.—Tremble then at the

view of the gulph which is opening before thee. Look with horror at the precipice, on the brink of which thou standest : and if yet a moment be left for retreat, think how thou mayst escape, and be saved.

BLAIR.

SECTION II.

A temperate pursuit of gain recommended.

THE world is abused, not only by persons who intemperately pursue its pleasures, but by those who have a sordid attachment to its gains. The latter respect a set of men of very different description from the former ; more decent in their carriage, and less flagrant in their vices ; but corrupted by the world in no less a degree. For the world is often abused by the men of business, as much as by the men of pleasure. When worldly success becomes the sole object of their life ; when the accumulation of fortune so engrosses them, as to harden their heart against every feeling of moral obligation ; when it renders them insensible to the calls of affection, and to the impressions of piety and religion ; they then come under the class of the covetous, whom, it is said, “ the Lord abhorreth.”

A good man may seek, by fair industry, to render his circumstances easy and plentiful. He may bestow a considerable portion of his time and attention, on the successful management of his worldly interests. All this is within the limits of that allowable use of the world, to which religion gives its sanction. But to a wise and good man, the world is only a secondary object. He remembers there is an eternity beyond it.

His care is, not merely to amass and possess, but to use his possessions well, as one who is an accountable being. He is not a slave, either to the hopes or the fears of the world. He would rather forfeit any present advantage, than obtain it at the expense of violating the divine law, or neglecting his duty. This is using the world like a good man. This is living in it, as a subject of the Almighty, and a member of the great community of mankind. To such a man, riches are a blessing. He may enjoy them ; but he will use them with liberality. They open a wide field to the exercise of his virtue, and allow it to shine with diffusive lustre.

Very opposite to this, is the character of the worldly-minded. To them, the mere attainment of earthly possessions, is an ultimate aim. They cannot be said to “use the world ;” for to possess, not to use or enjoy, is their object. They are emphatically said in Scripture, to “load themselves with thick clay.” Some sort of apology may be framed for them who seek to extract from the world, pleasure of one kind or other. But for those who know no pleasure, farther than “adding house to house, and field to field,” and calling them their own, it is hardly possible to frame any apology. Such persons are idolators of the worst kind ; for they have made the world their god. They daily worship and bow down before it : and hold nothing to be mean or base, which can promote the enlargement of their fortune.—He is an abuser of the world, let his possessions of it be ever so ample, who knows nothing higher than the gains of the world. He is an abuser of the world, who sacrifices probity, virtue, or humanity, to its interests. He is an abuser of the

world, who cannot occasionally retreat from it, to consider what character he bears in the sight of his Creator; and to what issue his conduct will bring him at last. In a word, the world is then properly used, when it is generously and beneficently enjoyed; neither hoarded up by avarice, nor squandered by ostentation.

BLAIR.

SECTION III.

Acknowledgment of error the mark of a wise and generous mind.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discover, that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves; and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from error in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose, that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient

immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered as either shameful or wonderful; and they would not receive, with so much emotion, intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, "I knew that my son was mortal." He that is convinced of an error, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of striving for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering, that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true, that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of reasoning or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding anger or vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things, in which the disputants have no other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the ob-

servation of every day will give new proofs, with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments ; how often the state of the question is altered ; how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented ; and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong, without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project, which he has found to be impracticable, or live in an inconvenient house, because it was contrived by himself. These are indeed follies : but they are only follies, and, however wild or ridiculous, can very little affect others. But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errors, but their vices ; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others ; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and abolition of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend. Let every man, who finds vanity so far predominant, as to betray him to the danger of this last degree of corruption, pause a moment, to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer, for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by the violence of desire, surprised by the suddenness of passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is

going to commit, by forcing his understanding to patronise those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it; and good and evil, when they have been once shown, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party, nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed can perform, is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless, whom they only thought vicious; that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles; that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success; and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed, that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which, having various relations, appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well-meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction, nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph? A man cannot spend all his life in frolic. Age, or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of serious consideration: and it will then afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice; that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others; and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused.

There is not perhaps in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles; of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return; of having blinded them to every beauty but the pain of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the fyrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves. By often contending, they grow sincere in the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them: for not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints, and the dying terrors of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cesar wrote an account of the errors committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is, perhaps, in rational estimation, greater than Cesar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. "So much," says Celsus, "does the open and artless confession of an error, become a man conscious that he has enough remaining to support his character."

As all error is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices, or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errors should know his retraction; and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

DR. JOHNSON.

SECTION IV.

On Cheerfulness.

I HAVE always preferred cheerfulness to mirth. The latter I consider as an act, the former as a habit of the mind. Mirth is short and transient, cheerfulness fixed and permanent. They are often raised into the greatest transports of mirth, who are subject to the greatest depressions of melancholy: on the contrary, cheerfulness, though it does not give the mind such an exquisite gladness, prevents it from falling into any depths of sorrow. Mirth is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of day-light in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity.

Men of austere principles look upon mirth as too wanton and dissolute for a state of probation, and as filled with a certain triumph and insolence of heart, that are inconsistent with a life which is every moment obnoxious to the greatest dangers.

Cheerfulness of mind is not liable to any of these exceptions. It is of a serious and composed nature.

It does not throw the mind into a condition improper for the present state of humanity ; and is very conspicuous in the characters of those who are looked upon as the greatest philosophers among the heathens, as well as among those who have been deservedly esteemed as saints and holy men among Christians.

If we consider cheerfulness in three lights, with regard to ourselves, to those we converse with, and to the great Author of our being, it will not a little recommend itself on each of these accounts. The man who is possessed of this excellent frame of mind, is not only easy in his thoughts, but a perfect master of all the powers and faculties of the soul : his imagination is always clear, and his judgment undisturbed ; his temper is even and unruffled, whether in action or in solitude. He comes with a relish to all those goods which nature has provided for him ; tastes all the pleasures of the creation which are poured about him ; and does not feel the full weight of those accidental evils which may befall him.

If we consider him in relation to the persons with whom he converses, it naturally produces love and good-will towards him. A cheerful mind is not only disposed to be affable and obliging, but raises the same good humour in those who come within its influence. A man finds himself pleased, he does not know why, with the cheerfulness of his companion : it is like a sudden sunshine that awakens a secret delight in the mind, without her attending to it. The heart rejoices of its own accord, and naturally flows out into friendship and benevolence towards the person who has so kindly an effect upon it.

When I consider this cheerful state of mind in its

third relation, I cannot but look upon it as a constant habitual gratitude to the great Author of nature. An inward cheerfulness is an implicit praise and thanksgiving to Providence under all its dispensations. It is a kind of acquiescence in the state wherein we are placed, and a secret approbation of the divine will in his conduct towards man.

There are but two things, which, in my opinion, can reasonably deprive us of this cheerfulness of heart. The first of these is the sense of guilt. A man who lives in a state of vice and impenitence, can have no title to that evenness and tranquillity of mind which is the health of the soul, and the natural effect of virtue and innocence. Cheerfulness in an ill man deserves a harder name than language can furnish us with, and is many degrees beyond what we commonly call folly or madness.

Atheism, by which I mean a disbelief of a Supreme Being, and consequently of a future state, under whatsoever title it shelters itself, may likewise very reasonably deprive a man of this cheerfulness of temper. There is something so particularly gloomy and offensive to human nature in the prospect of non-existence, that I cannot but wonder, with many excellent writers, how it is possible for a man to outlive the expectation of it. For my own part, I think the being of a God is so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only truth we are sure of, and such a truth as we meet with in every object, in every occurrence, and in every thought. If we look into the characters of this tribe of infidels, we generally find they are made up of pride, spleen, and cavil. It is indeed no wonder, that men, who are uneasy to themselves, should be so to the rest

of the world ; and how is it possible for a man to be otherwise than uneasy in himself, who is in danger every moment of losing his entire existence, and dropping into nothing !

The vicious man and atheist have therefore no pretence to cheerfulness, and would act very unreasonably, should they endeavour after it. It is impossible for any one to live in good humour, and enjoy his present existence, who is apprehensive either of torment or of annihilation ; of being miserable, or of not being at all.

After having mentioned these two great principles, which are destructive of cheerfulness in their own nature, as well as in right reason, I cannot think of any other that ought to banish this happy temper from a virtuous mind. Pain and sickness, shame and reproach, poverty and old age, nay death itself, considering the shortness of their duration, and the advantage we may reap from them, do not deserve the name of evils. A good mind may bear up under them with fortitude, with tranquillity, and with cheerfulness of heart. The tossing of a tempest does not discompose him, who is sure it will bring him to a joyful harbour.

A man who uses his best endeavours to live according to the dictates of virtue and right reason, has two perpetual sources of cheerfulness, in the consideration of his own nature, and of that Being on whom he has a dependance. If he looks into himself, he cannot but rejoice in that existence, which was so lately bestowed upon him, and which, after millions of ages, will be still new, and still in its beginning. How many self-congratulations naturally arise in the mind, when it reflects on this its entrance into eternity ; when it takes a view of those improveable faculties, which in a few

years, and even at its first setting out, have made so considerable a progress, and which will be still receiving an increase of perfection, and consequently an increase of happiness! The consciousness of such a being causes a perpetual diffusion of joy through the soul of a virtuous man; and makes him feel as much happiness as he is capable of conceiving.

The second source of cheerfulness to a good mind, is, its consideration of that Being on whom we have our dependance, and in whom, though we behold him as yet but in the first faint discoveries of his perfections, we see every thing that we can imagine as great, glorious, or amiable. We find ourselves every where upheld by his goodness, and surrounded with an immensity of love and mercy. In short, we depend upon a Being, whose power qualifies him to make us happy by an infinity of means; whose goodness and truth engage him to make those happy who desire it of him; and whose unchangeableness will secure for us this happiness to all eternity.

Such considerations, which every one should perpetually cherish in his thoughts, will banish from us all that secret heaviness of heart, which unthinking men are subject to when they lie under no real affliction; all that anguish which we may feel from any evil that actually oppresses us; to which I may likewise add, those little cracklings of mirth and folly, that are apter to betray virtue than support it; and establish in us such an even and cheerful temper, as will make us pleasing to ourselves, to those with whom we converse, and to him whom we are made to please.

ADDISON.

SECTION V.

Happy effects of contemplating the works of nature.

WITH the Divine works we are in every place surrounded. We can cast our eyes no where, without discerning the hand of Him who formed them, if the grossness of our minds will, only allow us to behold Him. Let giddy and thoughtless men turn aside a little from the haunts of riot. Let them stand still, and contemplate the wondrous works of God; and make trial of the effect which such contemplation would produce.—It were good for them that, even independently of the Author, they were more acquainted with his works; good for them, that from the societies of loose and dissolute men, they would retreat to the scenes of nature; would oftener dwell among them, and enjoy their beauties. This would form them to the relish of uncorrupted, innocent pleasures; and make them feel the value of calm enjoyments, as superior to the noise and turbulence of licentious gaiety. From the harmony of nature, and of nature's works, they would learn to hear sweeter sounds than what arise from "the viol, the tabret, and the pipe."

But to higher and more serious thoughts these works of nature give occasion, when considered in conjunction with the Creator who made them.—Let me call on you, my friends, to catch some interval of reflection, some serious moment, for looking with thoughtful eye on the world around you. Lift your view to that immense arch of heaven which encompasses you above. Behold the sun in all his splendour rolling over your head by day; and the moon, by night, in mild and

serene majesty, surrounded with that host of stars which present to your imagination an innumerable multitude of worlds. Listen to the awful voice of thunder. Listen to the roar of the tempest and the ocean. Survey the wonders that fill the earth which you inhabit. Contemplate a steady and powerful Hand, bringing round spring and summer, autumn and winter, in regular course; decorating this earth with innumerable beauties, diversifying it with innumerable inhabitants; pouring forth comforts on all that live; and, at the same time, overawing the nations with the violence of the elements, when it pleases the Creator to let them forth.—After you have viewed yourselves as surrounded with such a scene of wonders; after you have beheld, on every hand, such an astonishing display of majesty united with wisdom and goodness; are you not seized with solemn and serious awe? Is there not something which whispers within, that to this great Creator reverence and homage are due by all the rational beings whom he has made? Admitted to be spectators of his works, placed in the midst of so many great and interesting objects, can you believe that you were brought hither for no purpose, but to immerse yourselves in gross and brutal, or, at best, in trifling pleasures; lost to all sense of the wonders you behold; lost to all reverence of that God who gave you being, and who has erected this amazing fabric of nature, on which you look only with stupid and unmeaning eyes?—No: let the scenes which you behold prompt correspondent feelings. Let them awaken you from the degrading intoxication of licentiousness, into nobler emotions. Every object which you view in nature, whether great or small,

serves to instruct you. The star and the insect, the fiery meteor and the flower of spring, the verdant field and the lofty mountain, all exhibit a supreme Power, before which you ought to tremble and adore ; all preach the doctrine, all inspire the spirit of devotion and reverence. Regarding, then, the work of the Lord, let rising emotions of awe and gratitude call forth from your souls such sentiments as these :—" Lord, wherever I am, and whatever I enjoy, may I never forget thee, as the Author of nature ! May I never forget that I am thy creature and thy subject ! In this magnificent temple of the universe, where thou hast placed me, may I ever be thy faithful worshipper ; and may the reverence and the fear of God be the first sentiments of my heart !"

BLAIR.

SECTION VI.

On the advantages of order in conduct.

WHEN we consider the different parts of behaviour to which order is essential, it must necessarily occur, that they are all mutually connected, and hang upon each other. Throughout our affairs, our time, our expense, our amusements, our society, the principle of order must be equally carried, if we expect to reap any of its happy fruits. For if into any one of those great departments of life we suffer disorder to enter, it will spread through all the rest. In vain, for instance, we purpose to be orderly in the conduct of our affairs, if we are irregular in the distribution of our time. In vain we attempt to regulate our expense, if into our amusements, or our society, disorder has crept. We have admitted a principle of confusion which will defeat all our plans ; and perplex and entangle what we

fought to arrange. Uniformity is above all things necessary to order. If we desire that any thing should proceed according to method and rule, let "all things be done in order."

I must also observe, that in small, as well as in great affairs, a due regard to order is requisite. I mean not that we ought to look on those minute attentions which are apt to occupy frivolous minds, as connected either with virtue or wisdom. But we should remember, that disorder, like other immoralities, frequently takes rise from inconsiderable beginnings. They who, in the less transactions of life, are totally negligent of rule, will be in hazard of extending that negligence, by degrees, to such affairs and duties as will render them criminal. Remissness grows on all who study not to guard against it; and it is only by frequent exercise that the habits of order and punctuality can be thoroughly confirmed.

The great importance of this principle to moral and religious conduct, must be evident to every reflecting mind. Let us, however, take a summary view of the advantages which attend it.

First, The observance of order serves to correct that negligence which makes us omit some duties, and that hurry and precipitancy which make us perform others imperfectly. Our attention is thereby directed to its proper objects. We follow the straight path which Providence has pointed out to man; in the course of which all the different concerns of life present themselves regularly to him on every side. God and man, time and eternity, possess their proper stations, arise in succession to his view, and attract his care. Whereas he who runs on in a disorderly course, speedily involves

himself in a labyrinth, where he is surrounded with intricacy and darkness. The crooked paths into which he strikes, turn him aside from the proper line of human pursuit; hide from his sight the objects which he ought chiefly to regard, and bring others under his view, which serve no purpose but to distract and mislead him.

Next, by attending to order, we avoid idleness, that most fruitful source of crimes and evils. Acting upon a plan, meeting every thing in its own place, we constantly find innocent and useful employment for time. We are never at a loss how to dispose of our hours, or to fill up life agreeably. In the course of human action, there are two extremes equally dangerous to virtue; the multiplicity of affairs, and the total want of them. The man of order stands in the middle between these two extremes, and suffers from neither. He is occupied, but not oppressed. Whereas the disorderly, overloading one part of time, and leaving another vacant, are at one period overwhelmed with business, and at another, either idle through want of employment, or indolent through perplexity. Those seasons of indolence and idleness, which recur so often in their life, are their most dangerous moments. The mind, unhappy in its situation, and clinging to every object which can occupy or amuse it, is then aptest to throw itself into the arms of every vice and every folly.

Farther, by the preservation of order, we check inconstancy and levity. Fickle by nature is the human heart. It is fond of change; and perpetually tends to start aside from the straight line of conduct. Hence arises the propriety of bringing ourselves under subjec-

tion to method and rule ; which, though at first it may prove conſtraining, yet, by degrees, and from the experience of its happy effects, becomes natural and agreeable. It rectifies thoſe irregularities of temper and manners to which we give the name of caprice ; and which are diſtinguiſhing characteristics of a diſorderly mind. It is the parent of ſteadineſs of conduct. It forms conſiſtency of character. It is the ground of all the confidence we reſoſe in one another ; for, the diſorderly we know not where to find. In him only can we place any truſt who is uniform and regular ; who lives by principle, not by humour ; who acts upon a plan, and not by deſultory motions.

The advantages of order hitherto mentioned belong to rectitude of conduct. Let us conſider alſo how important it is to our ſelf-enjoyment and felicity. Order is the ſource of peace ; and peace is the higheſt of all temporal bleſſings. Order is indeed the only region in which tranquillity dwells. The very mention of confuſion imports diſturbance and vexation. Is it poſſible for that man to be happy, who cannot look into the ſtate of his affairs, or the tenor of his conduct, without diſcerning all to be embroiled ; who is either in the miſt of remorse for what he has neglected to do, or in the miſt of hurry to overtake what he finds, too late, was neceſſary to have been done ? Such as live according to order may be compared to the celeftial bodies, which move in regular courſes, and by ſtated laws ; whoſe influence is beneficent ; whoſe operations are quiet and tranquil. The diſorderly reſemble thoſe tumultuous elements on earth, which, by ſudden and violent irruptions, diſturb the courſe of nature. By miſmanagement of affairs, by exceſs in ex-

penſe, by irregularity in the indulgence of company and amuſement, they are perpetually creating moleſtation both to themſelves and others. They depart from their road to ſeek pleaſure; and inſtead of it, they every where raiſe up ſorrows. Being always found out of their proper place, they of courſe interfere and jar with others. The diſorders which they raiſe never fail to ſpread beyond their own line, and to involve many in confuſion and diſtreſs; whence they neceſſarily become the authors of tumult and contention, of diſcord and enmity. Whereas order is the foundation of union. It allows every man to carry on his own affairs without diſturbſing his neighbour. It is the golden chain, which holds together the ſocieties of men in friendſhip and peace.

BLAIR.

SECTION VII.

Reflections on the universal presence of the Deity.

IN one of my late papers, I had occaſion to conſider the ubiquity of the Godhead, and at the ſame time to ſhow, that as he is preſent to every thing, he cannot but be attentive to every thing, and privy to all the modes and parts of its exiſtence: or, in other words, that his omniſcience and omnipreſence are co-exiſtent, and run together through the whole infinity of ſpace. This conſideration might furniſh us with many incentives to devotion, and motives to morality: but as this ſubject has been handled by ſeveral excellent writers, I ſhall conſider it in a light in which I have not ſeen it placed by others.

First, how disconsolate is the condition of an intellectual being, who is thus present with his Maker, but at the same time receives no extraordinary benefit or advantage from his presence !

Secondly, How deplorable is the condition of an intellectual being, who feels no other effects from his presence, than such as proceed from divine wrath and indignation !

Thirdly, How happy is the condition of that intellectual being, who is sensible of his Maker's presence, from the secret effects of his mercy and loving-kindness !

First, How disconsolate is the condition of an intellectual being, who is thus present with his Maker, but at the same time receives no extraordinary benefit or advantage from his presence ! Every particle of matter is actuated by this Almighty Being which passes through it. The heavens and the earth, the stars and planets, move and gravitate by virtue of this great principle within them. All the dead parts of nature are invigorated by the presence of their Creator, and made capable of exerting their respective qualities. The several instincts, in the brute creation, do likewise operate and work towards the several ends which are agreeable to them, by this divine energy. Man only, who does not co-operate with his holy spirit, and is inattentive to his presence, receives none of those advantages from it, which are perfective of his nature, and necessary to his well-being. The divinity is with him, and in him, and every where about him, but of no advantage to him. It is the same thing to a man without religion, as if there were no God in the world. It is indeed impossible for an infinite Being to remove

himself from any of his creatures ; but though he cannot withdraw his essence from us, which would argue an imperfection in him, he can withdraw from us all the joys and consolations of it. His presence may perhaps be necessary to support us in our existence ; but he may leave this our existence to itself, with regard to its happiness or misery. For, in this sense, he may cast us away from his presence, and take his holy spirit from us. This single consideration one would think sufficient to make us open our hearts to all those infusions of joy and gladness, which are so near at hand, and ready to be poured in upon us ; especially when we consider, secondly, the deplorable condition of an intellectual being, who feels no other effects from his Maker's presence, than such as proceed from divine wrath and indignation.

We may assure ourselves, that the great Author of nature will not always be as one who is indifferent to any of his creatures. Those who will not feel him in his love, will be sure at length to feel him in his displeasure. And how dreadful is the condition of that creature, who is sensible of the being of his Creator, only by what he suffers from him ! He is as essentially present in hell as in heaven ; but the inhabitants of those dismal regions behold him only in his wrath, and shrink within the flames to conceal themselves from him. It is not in the power of imagination to conceive the fearful effects of Omnipotence incensed.

But I shall only consider the wretchedness of an intellectual being, that, in this life, lies under the displeasure of him, who, at all times, and in all places, is intimately united with him. He is able to disquiet the soul, and vex it in all its faculties. He can hinder

any of the greatest comforts of life from refreshing us, and give an edge to every one of its slightest calamities. Who then can bear the thought of being an out-cast from his presence, that is from the comforts of it, or of feeling it only in its terrors? How pathetic is that expostulation of Job, when for the real trial of his patience, he was made to look upon himself in this deplorable condition! “Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am become a burden to myself?” But, thirdly, how happy is the condition of that intellectual being, who is sensible of his Maker’s presence, from the secret effects of his mercy and loving kindness!

The blessed in heaven behold him face to face, that is, are as sensible of his presence as we are of the presence of any person whom we look upon with our eyes. There is doubtless a faculty in spirits, by which they apprehend one another, as our senses do material objects; and there is no question but our souls, when they are disembodied, or placed in glorified bodies, will, by this faculty, in whatever part of space they reside, be always sensible of the divine presence. We, who have this veil of flesh standing between us and the world of spirits, must be content to know the spirit of God is present with us by the effects which he produces in us. Our outward senses are too gross to apprehend him. We may however taste and see how gracious he is, by his influence upon our minds; by those virtuous thoughts which he awakens in us; by those secret comforts and refreshments which he conveys into our souls; and by those ravishing joys and inward satisfactions which are frequently springing up, and diffusing themselves among the thoughts of good

men. He is lodged in our very essence, and is as a soul within the soul, to irradiate its understanding, rectify its will, purify its passions, and enliven all the powers of man. How happy therefore is an intellectual being, who, by prayer and meditation, by virtue and good works, opens this communication between God and his own soul ! Though the whole creation frowns, and all nature looks black about him, he has his light and support within, that are able to cheer his mind, and bear him up in the midst of all those horrors which encompass him. He knows that his helper is at hand, and is always nearer to him than any thing else can be, which is capable of annoying or terrifying him. In the midst of calumny or contempt, he attends to that Being who whispers better things within his soul, and whom he looks upon as his defender, his glory, and the lifter-up of his head. In his deepest solitude and retirement, he knows that he is in company with the greatest of beings ; and perceives within himself such real sensations of his presence, as are more delightful than any thing that can be met with in the conversation of his creatures. Even in the hour of death, he considers the pains of his dissolution to be only the breaking down of that partition, which stands betwixt his soul, and the sight of that being who is always present with him, and is about to manifest itself to him in fulness of joy.

If we would be thus happy, and thus sensible of our Maker's presence, from the secret effects of his mercy and goodness, we must keep such a watch over all our thoughts, that in the language of the scripture, his soul may have pleasure in us. We must take care not to grieve his holy spirit, and endeavour to make the me-

ditations of our hearts always acceptable in his sight, that he may delight thus to reside and dwell in us. The light of nature could direct Seneca to this doctrine, in a very remarkable passage in one of his epistles: "There is (says he) a holy spirit residing in us, who watches and observes both good and evil men, and will treat us after the same manner that we treat him." But I shall conclude this discourse with those more emphatical words in divine revelation: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

ADDISON.

CHAPTER III.

ARGUMENTATIVE PIECES.

SECTION I.

Our imperfect knowledge of a future state, suited to the condition of man.

THE sceptic, who is dissatisfied with the obscurity which Divine Providence has wisely thrown over the future state, conceives that more information would be reasonable and salutary. He desires to have his view enlarged beyond the limits of this corporeal scene. Instead of resting upon evidence which requires discussion, which must be supported by much reasoning, and which, after all, he alleges yields very imperfect information, he demands the everlasting mansions to be so displayed, as to place faith on a level with the evidence of sense. What noble and happy effects, he exclaims, would instantly follow, if man thus beheld his present and his future existence at once before him! He would then become worthy of his rank in the creation. Instead of being the sport, as now, of degrading passions and childish attachments, he would act solely on the principles of immortality. His pursuit of virtue would be steady; his life would be undisturbed and happy. Superior to the attacks of distress, and to the solicitations of pleasure, he would advance, by a regular progress, towards those divine rewards and honours which were continually present to his view.—Thus fancy, with as much

ease and confidence as if it were a perfect judge of creation, erects a new world to itself, and exults with admiration of its own work. But let us pause, and suspend this admiration, till we coolly examine the consequences that would follow from this supposed reformation of the universe.

Consider the nature and circumstances of man. Introduced into the world in an indigent condition, he is supported at first by the care of others ; and, as soon as he begins to act for himself, finds labour and industry to be necessary for sustaining his life, and supplying his wants. Mutual defence and interest give rise to society ; and society, when formed, requires distinctions of property, diversity of conditions, subordination of ranks, and a multiplicity of occupations, in order to advance the general good. The services of the poor, and the protection of the rich, become reciprocally necessary. The governors, and the governed, must co-operate for general safety. Various arts must be studied ; some respecting the cultivation of the mind, others the care of the body ; some to ward off the evils, and some to provide the conveniences of life. In a word, by the destination of his Creator, and the necessities of his nature, man commences, at once, an active, not merely a contemplative being. Religion assumes him as such. It supposes him employed in this world, as on a busy stage. It regulates, but does not abolish, the enterprises and cares of ordinary life. It addresses itself to the various ranks in society ; to the rich and the poor, to the magistrate and the subject. It rebukes the slothful ; directs the diligent how to labour ; and requires every man to do his own business.

Suppose, now, that veil to be withdrawn which conceals another world from our view. Let all obscurity vanish ; let us no longer “ seek darkly, as through a glass ;” but let every man enjoy that intuitive perception of divine and eternal objects, which the sceptic was supposed to desire. The immediate effect of such a discovery would be, to annihilate in our eye all human objects, and to produce a total stagnation in the affairs of the world. Were the celestial glory exposed to our admiring view ; did the angelic harmony sound in our enraptured ears ; what earthly concerns could have the power of engaging our attention for a single moment ? All the studies and pursuits, the arts and labours, which now employ the activity of man, which support the order, or promote the happiness of society, would lie neglected and abandoned. Those desires and fears, those hopes and interests by which we are at present stimulated, would cease to operate.— Human life would present no objects sufficient to rouse the mind ; to kindle the spirit of enterprize, or to urge the hand of industry. If the mere sense of duty engaged a good man to take some part in the business of the world, the task, when submitted to, would prove distasteful. Even the preservation of life would be slighted, if he were not bound to it by the authority of God. Impatient of his confinement within this tabernacle of dust, languishing for the happy day of his translation to those glorious regions which were displayed to his sight, he would sojourn on earth as a melancholy exile. Whatever Providence has prepared for the entertainment of man, would be viewed with contempt. Whatever is now attractive in society, would appear insipid. In a word, he would be no

longer a fit inhabitant of this world, nor be qualified for those exertions which are allotted to him in his present sphere of being. But, all his faculties being sublimated above the measure of humanity, he would be in the condition of a being of superior order, who, obliged to reside among men, would regard their pursuits with scorn, as dreams, trifles, and peurile amusements of a day.

But to this reasoning it may perhaps be replied, that such consequences as I have now stated, supposing them to follow, deserve not much regard.—For what though the present arrangement of human affairs were entirely changed, by a clearer view, and a stronger impression of our future state; would not such a change prove the highest blessing to man? Is not his attachment to worldly objects the great source both of his misery and his guilt? Employed in perpetual contemplation of heavenly objects, and in preparation for the enjoyment of them, would he not become more virtuous, and of course more happy, than the nature of his present employments and attachments permits to be?—Allowing for a moment, the consequence to be such, this much is yielded, that, upon the supposition which was made, man would not be the creature which he now is, nor human life the state which we now behold. How far the change would contribute to his welfare, comes to be considered.

If there be any principle fully ascertained by religion, it is, that this life was intended for a state of trial and improvement to man. His preparation for a better world required a gradual purification, carried on by steps of progressive discipline. The situation, therefore, here assigned him, was such as to answer his design, by calling forth all his active powers, by

giving full scope to his moral dispositions, and bringing to light his whole character. Hence it became proper, that difficulty and temptation should arise in the course of his duty. Ample rewards were promised to virtue; but these rewards were left, as yet, in obscurity and distant prospect. The impressions of sense were so balanced against the discoveries of immortality, as to allow a conflict between faith and sense, between conscience and desire, between present pleasure and future good. In this conflict, the souls of good men are tried, improved, and strengthened. In this field their honours are reaped. Here are formed the capital virtues of fortitude, temperance, and self-denial; moderation in prosperity, patience in adversity, submission to the will of God, and charity and forgiveness to men, amidst the various competitions of worldly interest.

Such is the plan of Divine wisdom for man's improvement. But put the case, that the plan devised by human wisdom were to take place, and that the rewards of the just were to be more fully displayed to view; the exercise of all those graces which I have mentioned, would be entirely superceded. Their very names would be unknown. Every temptation being withdrawn, every worldly attachment being subdued by the overpowering discoveries of eternity, no trial of sincerity, no discrimination of characters, would remain; no opportunity would be afforded for those active exertions, which are the means of purifying and perfecting the good. On the competition between time and eternity, depends the chief exercise of human virtue. The obscurity which at present hangs over eternal objects, preserves the competition. Remove that obscurity, and you remove human virtue

from its place. You overthrow that whole system of discipline, by which imperfect creatures are, in this life; gradually trained up for a more perfect state.

This, then, is the conclusion to which at last we arrive: that the full display which was demanded, of the heavenly glory, would be so far from improving the human soul, that it would abolish those virtues and duties, which are the great instruments of its improvement. It would be unsuitable to the character of man in every view, either as an active being, or a moral agent. It would disqualify him from taking part in the affairs of the world; for relishing the pleasures, or for discharging the duties of life: in a word, it would entirely defeat the purpose of his being placed on this earth. And the question, why the Almighty has been pleased to leave a spiritual world, and the future existence of man, under so much obscurity, resolves in the end into this, why there should be such a creature as man in the universe of God?—Such is the issue of the improvements proposed to be made on the plans of Providence. They add to the discoveries of the superior wisdom of God, and of the presumption and folly of man.

BLAIR.

SECTION II.

The toils of virtue bear no proportion to the happiness reserved for the good hereafter.

A LEWD young fellow seeing an aged hermit go by him barefoot, "Father," says he, "you are in a very miserable condition if there is not another world." "True, son," said the hermit; "but what is thy con-

dition if there is ?"--Man is a creature designed for two different states of being, or rather for two different lives. His first life is short and transient ; his second permanent and lasting. The question we are all concerned in is this ; in which of these two lives it is our chief interest to make ourselves happy ? or, in other words, whether we should endeavour to secure to ourselves the pleasures and gratifications of a life, which is uncertain and precarious, and, at its utmost length, of a very inconsiderable duration, or to secure to ourselves the pleasures of a life, which is fixed and settled, and will never end ? Every man, upon the first hearing of this question, knows very well which side of it he ought to close with. But, however right we are in theory, it is plain that, in practice, we adhere to the wrong side of the question. We make provision for this life as though it were never to have an end ; and for the other life, as though it were never to have a beginning.

Should a spirit of superior rank, who is a stranger to human nature, accidentally alight upon the earth, and take a survey of its inhabitants, what would his notions of us be ? Would he not think that we are a species of beings made for quite different ends and purposes than what we really are ? Would he not imagine that we were placed in this world to get riches and honors ? Would he not think that it was our duty to toil after wealth, and station, and title ? Nay, would he not believe we were forbidden poverty by threats of eternal punishment, and enjoined to pursue our pleasures under pain of perdition ? He would certainly imagine that we were influenced by a scheme of duties quite opposite to those which are indeed prescribed to us. And, truly, according to such an imagination, he

must conclude, that we are a species of the most obedient creatures in the universe ; that we are constant to our duty ; and that we keep a steady eye on the end for which we were sent hither.

But how great would be his astonishment, when he learnt that we were beings not designed to exist in this world above threescore and ten years ; and that the greater part of this busy species fall short even of that age ! How would he be lost in horror and admiration, when he should know that these creatures, who lay out all their endeavours for this life, which scarcely deserves the name of existence, when, I say, he should know that they are to exist to all eternity in another life, for which they make no preparations ! Nothing can be a greater disgrace to reason, than that men, who are persuaded of these two different states of being, should be perpetually employed in providing for a life of threescore and ten years, and neglecting to make provision for that, which after many myriads of years, will be still new and still beginning ; especially when we consider, that our endeavours for making ourselves great, or rich, or honourable, or whatever else we place our happiness in, may after all prove unsuccessful ; whereas, if we constantly and sincerely endeavour to make ourselves happy in the other life, we are sure that our endeavours will succeed, and that we shall not be disappointed of our hope.

The following question is proposed by one of the school-men : “ Supposing the whole body of the earth were a great ball or mass of the finest sand, and that a single grain or particle of this sand should be annihilated every thousand years ; supposing then that you had it in your choice to be happy all the while this prodigious

mass of sand was consuming, by this slow method, until there was not a grain of it left, on condition you were to be miserable for ever after ; or, supposing that you might be happy for ever after, on condition you would be miserable until the whole mass of sand were thus annihilated, at the rate of one sand in a thousand years ; which of these two cases would you make your choice?"

It must be confessed, in this case, so many thousands of years are to the imagination as a kind of eternity, though in reality they do not bear so great a proportion to that duration which is to follow them, as a unit does to the greatest number which you can put together in figures, or as one of those sands to the supposed heap. Reason therefore tell us, without any manner of hesitation, which would be the better part in this choice. However, as I have before intimated, our reason might, in such case, be so overset by the imagination, as to dispose some persons to sink under the consideration of the great length of the first part of this duration, and of the great distance of that second duration which is to succeed it : the mind, I say, might give itself up to that happiness which is at hand, considering that it is so very near, and that it would last so very long. But when the choice we actually have before us is this—Whether we will choose to be happy for the space of only threescore and ten, nay perhaps of only twenty or ten years, I might say of only a day or an hour, and miserable to all eternity ; or, on the contrary, miserable for this short term of years, and happy for a whole eternity—what words are sufficient to express that folly and want of consideration, which in such a case makes a wrong choice?

I here put the case even at the worst, by supposing

what seldom happens, that a course of virtue makes us miserable in this life ; but if we suppose, as it generally happens, that virtue would make us more happy even here than a contrary course of vice ; how can we sufficiently admire the stupidity or madness of those persons, who are capable of making so absurd a choice.

Every wise man therefore will consider this life only as it may conduce to the happiness of the other ; and cheerfully sacrifice the pleasures of a few years to those of eternity.

SPECTATOR.

SECTION III.

Youth the proper season for gaining knowledge, and forming religious habits.

THE duty which young people owe to their instructors, cannot be better shown, than in the effect which the instructions they receive have upon them. They would do well, therefore, to consider the advantages of an early attention to these two things, both of great importance, knowledge and religion.

The great use of knowledge, in all its various branches, (to which the learned languages are generally considered as an introduction,) is to free the mind from the prejudices of ignorance ; and to give it juster and more enlarged conceptions, than are the mere growth of rude nature. By reading, we add the experience of others to our own. It is the improvement of the mind chiefly, that makes the difference between man and man ; and gives one man a real superiority over another.

Besides, the mind must be employed. The lower orders of men have their attention much engrossed by

those employments, in which the necessities of life engage them : and it is happy that they have. Labour stands in the room of education ; and fills up those vacancies of mind, which, in a state of idleness, would be engrossed by vice. And if they, who have more leisure, do not substitute something in the room of this, their minds also will become the prey of vice ; and the more so, as they have the means to indulge it more in their power. A vacant mind is exactly that house mentioned in the gospel, which the devil found empty. In he entered ; and taking with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, they took possession. It is an undoubted truth, that one vice indulged, introduces others ; and that each succeeding vice becomes more depraved. If then the mind must be employed, what can fill up its vacuities more rationally than the acquisition of knowledge ? Let us therefore thank God for the opportunities he has afforded us ; and not turn into a curse those means of leisure, which might become so great a blessing.

But however necessary to us knowledge may be, religion, we know, is infinitely more so. The one adorns a man, and gives him, it is true, superiority, and rank in life ; but the other is absolutely essential to his happiness.

In the midst of youth, health, and abundance, the world is apt to appear a very gay and pleasing scene ; it engages our desires ; and, in a degree, satisfies them also. But it is wisdom to consider, that a time will come, when youth, health, and fortune, will all fail us : and if disappointment and vexation do not sour our taste for pleasure, at least sickness and infirmities will destroy it. In these gloomy seasons, and, above

all, at the approach of death, what will become of us without religion? When this world fails where shall we fly, if we expect no refuge in another? Without holy hope in God, and resignation to his will, and trust in him for deliverance, what is there that can secure us against the evils of life?

The great utility therefore of knowledge and religion being thus apparent, it is highly incumbent upon us to pay a studious attention to them in our youth. If we do not, it is more than probable that we shall never do it: that we shall grow old in ignorance, by neglecting the one; and old in vice, by neglecting the other.

For improvement in knowledge, youth is certainly the fittest season. The mind is then ready to receive any impression. It is free from all that care and attention which, in riper age, the affairs of life bring with them. The memory too is stronger and better able to acquire the rudiments of knowledge; and as the mind is then void of ideas, it is more suited to those parts of learning which are conversant in words. Besides, there are sometimes in youth a modesty and ductility, which in advanced years, if those years especially have been left a prey to ignorance, become self sufficiency and prejudice: and these effectually bar up all the inlets to knowledge.—But, above all, unless habits of attention and application are early gained, we shall scarcely acquire them afterwards.—The inconsiderate youth seldom reflects upon this; nor knows his loss, till he knows also that it cannot be retrieved.

Nor is youth more the season to acquire knowledge, than to form religious habits. It is a great point to get habit on the side of virtue: it will make every thing smooth and easy. The earliest principles are

generally the most lasting ; and those of a religious cast are seldom wholly lost. Though the temptations of the world may, now and then, draw the well-principled youth aside ; yet his principles being continually at war with his practice, there is hope, that in the end the better part may overcome the worse, and bring on a reformation : whereas he, who has suffered habits of vice to get possession of his youth, has little chance of being brought back to a sense of religion. In the common course of things it can rarely happen. Some calamity must rouse him. He must be awakened by a storm, or sleep for ever.— How much better is it then to make that easy to us, which we know is best ? And to form those habits now, which hereafter we shall wish we had formed ?

There are persons, who would restrain youth from imbibing any religious principles, till they can judge for themselves ; lest they should imbibe prejudice for truth. But why should not the same caution be used in science also, and the minds of youth left void of all impressions ? The experiment, I fear, in both cases, would be dangerous. If the mind were left uncultivated during so long a period, though nothing else should find entrance, vice certainly would : and it would make the larger shoots, as the soil would be vacant. It would be better that young persons receive knowledge and religion mixed with error, than none at all. For when the mind comes to reflect, it may deposit its prejudices by degrees, and get right at last : but in a state of stagnation it will infallibly become foul.

To conclude, our youth bears the same proportion to our more advanced life, as this world does to the next. In this life we must form and cultivate those ha-

bits of virtue, which will qualify us for a better state. If we neglect them here, and contract habits of an opposite kind, instead of gaining that exalted state, which is promised to our improvement, we shall of course sink into that state, which is adapted to the habits we have formed.

Exactly thus is youth introductory to manhood ; to which it is, properly speaking, a state of preparation. During this season we must qualify ourselves for the parts we are to act hereafter. In manhood we bear the fruit, which has in youth been planted. If we have fauntered away our youth, we must expect to be ignorant men. If indolence and inattention have taken an early possession of us, they will probably increase as we advance in life ; and make us a burden to ourselves, and useless to society. If again, we suffer ourselves to be misled by vicious inclinations, they will daily get new strength, and end in dissolute lives. But if we cultivate our minds in youth, attain habits of attention and industry, of virtue and sobriety, we shall find ourselves well prepared to act our future parts in life ; and what above all things ought to be our care, by gaining this command over ourselves, we shall be more able as we get forward in the world, to resist every new temptation, as soon as it appears.

GILPIN.

SECTION IV.

Providence proved from animal instinct.

I MUST confess I am infinitely delighted with those speculations of nature, which are to be made in a coun-

try life ; and as my reading has very much lain among books of natural history, I cannot forbear recollecting, upon this occasion, the several remarks which I have met with in authors, and comparing them with what falls under my own observation ; the arguments for Providence, drawn from the natural history of animals, being, in my opinion, demonstrative.

The make, of every kind of animal is different from that of every other kind ; and yet there is not the least turn in the muscles or twist in the fibres of any one, which does not render them more proper for that particular animal's way of life, than any other cast or texture of them would have been.

It is astonishing to consider the different degrees of care that descend from the parent to the young, so far as is absolutely necessary for leaving a posterity. Some creatures cast their eggs as chance directs them, and think of them no farther, as insects, and several kind of fish : others, of a nicer frame, find out proper beds to deposit them in, and there leave them, as the serpent, the crocodile, and ostrich ; others hatch their eggs and tend the birth, until it is able to shift for itself.

What can we call the principle which directs every different kind of bird to observe a particular plan in the structure of its nest, and directs all of the same species to work after the same model ? It cannot be imitation ; for though you hatch a crow under a hen, and never let it see any of the works of its own kind, the nest it makes will be the same, to the laying of a stick, with all the nests of the same species. It cannot be reason ; for were animals endued with it to as great a degree as man, their buildings would be as different as ours, according to the different conveniences that they would propose to themselves.

Is it not remarkable that the same temper of weather which raises this general warmth in animals, should cover the trees with leaves, and the fields with grass, for their security and concealment, and produce such infinite swarms of insects for the support and sustenance of their respective broods ?

Is it not wonderful, that the love of the parent should be so violent while it lasts, and that it should last no longer than is necessary for the preservation of the young ? But notwithstanding this natural love in brutes is much more violent and intense than in rational creatures, Providence has taken care that it should be no longer troublesome to the parent, than it is useful to the young ; for so soon as the wants of the latter cease, the mother withdraws her fondness, and leaves them to provide for themselves : and what is a very remarkable circumstance in this part of instinct, we find that the love of the parent may be lengthened out beyond its usual time, if the preservation of the species requires it ; as we may see in birds that drive away their young as soon as they are able to get their livelihood, but continue to feed them if they are tied to the nest, or confined within a cage, or by any other means appear to be out of a condition of supplying their own necessities. This natural love is not observed in animals to ascend from the young to the parent, which is not at all necessary for the continuance of the species : nor indeed in reasonable creatures does it rise in any proportion, as it spreads itself downwards ; for in all family affection, we find protection granted, and favours bestowed, are greater motives to love and tenderness, than safety, benefits, or life received.

One would wonder to hear sceptical men disputing

for the reason of animals ; and telling us it is only our pride and prejudices that will not allow them the use of that faculty. Reason shows itself in all occurrences of life ; whereas the brute makes not discovery of such a talent, but in what immediately regards his own preservation, or the continuance of his species. Animals in their generation are wiser than the sons of men ; but thir wisdom is confined to a few particulars, and lies in a very narrow compass. Take a brute out of its instinct, and you find him wholly deprived of understanding.—To use an instance that comes often under observation. With what caution does the hen provide herself a nest in places unfrequented, and free from noise and disturbance ! When she has laid her eggs in such a manner that she can cover them, what care does she take in turning them frequently, that all parts may partake of the vital warmth ! When she leaves them, to provide for her necessary sustenance, how punctually does she return before they have time to cool, and become incapable of producing an animal ! In the summer you see her giving herself greater freedoms, and quitting her care for above two hours together ; but in winter, when the rigour of the season would chill the principles of life, and destroy the young ones, she grows more assiduous in her attendance, and stays away but half the time. When the birth approaches, with how much nicety and attention does she help the chick to break its prison ! not to take notice of her, covering it from the injuries of the weather, providing it proper nourishment, and teaching it to help itself ; nor to mention her forsaking the nest, if, after the usual time of reckoning, the young one does not make its appearance. A chymical operation could not be followed

with greater art or diligence, than is seen in the hatching of a chick; though there are many other birds that shew an infinitely greater sagacity in all the forementioned particulars. But at the same time, the hen that has all this seeming ingenuity, (which is indeed absolutely necessary for the propagation of the species,) considered in other respects, is without the least glimmerings of thought or common sense. She mistakes a piece of chalk for an egg, and sits upon it in the same manner: she is insensible of any increase or diminution in the number of those she lays: she does not distinguish between her own and those of another species; and when the birth appears of ever so different a bird, will cherish it for her own. In all these circumstances, which do not carry an immediate regard to the subsistence of herself or her species, she is a mere idiot.

There is not, in my opinion, any thing more mysterious in nature, than this instinct in animals, which thus rises above reason, and falls infinitely short of it. It cannot be accounted for by any properties in matter, and at the same time works after so odd a manner, that one cannot think it the faculty of an intellectual being. For my own part, I look upon it as upon the principle of gravitation in bodies, which is not to be explained by any known qualities inherent in the bodies themselves, nor by any laws of mechanism; but which, according to the best notions of the greatest philosophers, is an immediate impression from the first Mover, and the divine energy acting in the creatures.

SPECTATOR.

SECTION V.

The conduct of Providence, however mysterious, is wise and just.

IN looking abroad into the world, how many scenes do we behold, which are far from corresponding with any ideas we could form of the government of Heaven? - Many nations of the earth we see lying in a state of barbarity and misery; sunk in such gross ignorance, as degrades them below the rank of rational beings; or abandoned to be the prey of cruel oppression and tyranny. When we look to the state of individuals around us, we hear the lamentations of the unhappy on every hand. We meet with weeping parents, and mourning friends. We behold the young cut off in the flower of their days, and the aged left desolate in the midst of sorrows. The useful and virtuous are swept away and the worthless left to flourish. The lives of the best men are often filled with discouragements and disappointed hopes. Merit languishes in neglected solitude; and vanity and presumption gain the admiration of the world. From the scourge of calumny, and from the hand of violence, the injured look up to God as the avenger of their cause; but often they look up in vain. He is "a God that hideth himself." He dwelleth, as to them, in the secret place of darkness; or, if he dwelleth in light, it is in "light to which no man can approach." Resignation may seal up their lips; but, in silence, they drop the tear, and mourn while they adore.

Such, it must not be dissembled, are difficulties which encounter us when we attempt to trace the present ways of God. At the same time, upon reflection,

we may be satisfied that causes can be assigned for things appearing in this unfavourable light ; and that there is no reason to be surpris'd at the Divine conduct being at present mysterious.

The monarchy of the universe is a great and complicated system. It comprehends numberless generations of men, who are brought forth to act their parts for purposes unknown to us. It includes two worlds at once ; the world that now is, and which is only a small portion of existence ; and a world that is to come, which endures for eternity. To us, no more than the beginnings of things are visible. We see only some broken parts of a great whole. We trace but a few links of that chain of being, which, by secret connexions, binds together the present and the future. Such knowledge is afforded us as is sufficient for supplying the exigencies and wants of our present state ; but it does no more. Peeping abroad from a dark corner of the universe, we attempt in vain to explore the counsels that govern the world. It is an attempt to sound an unfathomable deep with a scanty line ; and with a feeble wing to ascend above the stars. In any complicated work, even of human art, it is found necessary to be acquainted with the design of the whole, in order to judge of the fitness of its parts. In a scheme so complex as the administration of the world, where all the parts refer to one another, and where what is seen is often subordinate to what is invisible, how is it possible but that our judgments must be often erroneous, and our complaints ill-founded ? If a peasant or a cottager be incapable of judging of the government of a mighty empire, is it surprising that we should be at a loss concerning the conduct of the Almighty towards his creatures ?

But, on this argument still more can be said for our satisfaction. We are to observe, that complete information respecting the ways of God, not only was not to be expected here; but, moreover, that it would have been hurtful, if granted to us in our present state. It would have proved inconsistent with that state; with the actions which we have to perform in it, and the duties we have to fulfil. It would indeed have overthrown the whole design of our being placed in this world. We are placed here under the trial of our virtue. Ignorance of the events that are ordained to befall us, ignorance of the plans and the decrees of heaven, enter necessarily into a state of trial. In order to exercise both our intellectual and moral powers, and to carry them forward to improvement, we must be left to find our way in the midst of difficulties and doubts, of hardships and sufferings. We must be taught to act our part with constancy, though the reward of our constancy be distant. We must learn to bear with patience whatever our Creator judges proper to lay upon us, though we see not the reason of the hardships he inflicts. If we were let into the secret of the whole plan of Providence; if the justice of Heaven were, in every step of its procedure, made manifest to our view, man would no longer be the creature he now is, nor would his present state answer any purpose of discipline or trial.

Mystery and darkness, therefore, must of necessity now take place in the course of things. Our present state can be no other than a state of twilight or dawn, where dubious forms will often present themselves to us, and where we shall find ourselves in a middle condition between complete light and total darkness.

Had we enjoyed no evidence of a just Judge ruling the earth, and of his providence interposing in our affairs, virtue would have been altogether deprived of its encouragement and support. Had the evidence, on the other hand, been so strong as to place the hand of the Almighty constantly before our eyes, the intention of our present existence would have been defeated, and no trial of virtue have remained. Instead, therefore, of complaining of the obscurity which, at present, covers the conduct of Providence, we see that, on the whole, we have reason to submit and adore.

BLAIR.

SECTION VI.

The great Christian rule of justice.

AMONG questions which have been discussed without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superior excellence of one virtue to another; which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men, whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment; and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement, and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress; but which duty ought to be most

esteemed, we may continue to debate, without inconvenience, if all be diligently performed, as there is opportunity or need : for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind ; and controversies, merely speculative, are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the Divine Author of our religion, it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without observing how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness ; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity, than to relieve distress ; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us, in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive : “ Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.” A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted, as far as the private conscience requires to be informed ; a law, of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications, than honesty of intention, and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal prin-

ciple, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, is bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve ; and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it is our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced, as requiring some skill in the direction of conscience to adapt them to this great rule, is that of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the suppliant, he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and apparently, does to others what he would not that others should do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy is bound by those laws which regard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited it, by crimes against the laws of common

morality, equally acknowledged by all nations; because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, “debts of justice, and debts of charity.” The immediate and primary intention of this precept is to establish a rule of justice; and I know not whether invention, or sophistry, can start a single difficulty to retard its application, when it is thus expressed and explained, “Let every man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.”

The discharge of the “debts of charity,” or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances, and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary; and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow, in the distribution of kindness, something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule therefore is not equally determinate and absolute with respect to offices of kindness, and acts of liberality; because liberality and kindness, absolutely deter-

mined, would lose their nature ; for how could we be called tender or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold ?

Yet even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us ; for we can only know what others suffer or want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state ? nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule, than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens, that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity ; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the infirmity of human nature will scarcely suffer a man groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough till his deliverance is completed : not therefore what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant ; since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But, in all enquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears, to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that if he were to exchange conditions with his dependent, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform ; and, when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety. DR. JOHNSON.

CHAPTER IV.

DESCRIPTIVE PIECES.

SECTION I.

The heavens and the earth show the glory and the wisdom of their Creator. The earth happily adapted to the nature of man.

THE universe may be considered as the palace in which the Deity resides ; and the earth, as one of its apartments. In this, all the meaner races of animated nature mechanically obey him ; and stand ready to execute his commands, without hesitation. Man alone is found refractory : he is the only being endued with a power of contradicting these mandates. The Deity was pleased to exert superior power in creating him a superior being ; a being endued with a choice of good and evil ; and capable, in some measure, of co-operating with his own intentions. Man, therefore, may be considered as a limited creature, endued with powers imitative of those residing in the Deity. He is thrown into a world that stands in need of his help ; and he has been granted a power of producing harmony from partial confusion.

If, therefore, we consider the earth as allotted for our habitation, we shall find, that much has been given us to enjoy, and much to amend ; that we have ample reason for our gratitude, and many for our industry. In those great outlines of nature, to which art cannot reach, and where our greatest efforts must have been

ineffectual, God himself has finished every thing with amazing grandeur and beauty. Our beneficent Father has considered these parts of nature as peculiarly his own ; as parts which no creature could have skill or strength to amend : and he has, therefore, made them incapable of alteration, or of more perfect regularity. The heavens and the firmament show the wisdom and the glory of the Workman. Astronomers, who are best skilled in the symmetry of systems, can find nothing there that they can alter for the better. God made these perfect, because no subordinate being could correct their defects.

When, therefore, we survey nature on this side, nothing can be more splendid, more correct, or amazing. We there behold a Deity residing in the midst of a universe, infinitely extended every way, animating all, and cheering the vacuity with his presence ! We behold an immense and shapeless mass of matter, formed into worlds by his power, and dispersed at intervals, to which even the imagination cannot travel ! In this great theatre of his glory, a thousand suns, like our own, animate their respective systems, appearing and vanished at Divine command. We behold our own bright luminary, fixed in the centre of its system, wheeling its planets in times proportioned to their distances, and at once dispensing light, heat, and action. The earth also is seen with its twofold motion ; producing, by the one, the change of seasons ; and by the other, the grateful vicissitudes of day and night. With what silent magnificence is all this performed ! with what seeming ease ! The works of art are exerted with interrupted force ; and their noisy progress discovers the obstructions they receive ; but the earth, with a

filent, steady rotation, successively presents every part of its bosom to the sun ; at once imbibing nourishment and light from that parent of vegetation and fertility.

But not only provisions of heat and light are thus supplied ; the whole surface of the earth is covered with a transparent atmosphere, that turns with its motion, and guards it from external injury. The rays of the sun are thus broken into a genial warmth ; and, while the surface is assisted, a gentle heat is produced in the bowels of the earth, which contributes to cover it with verdure. Waters also are supplied in healthful abundance, to support life, and assist vegetation. Mountains rise, to diversify the prospect, and give a current to the stream. Seas extend from one continent to the other, replenished with animals, that may be turned to human support ; and also serving to enrich the earth with a sufficiency of vapour. Breezes fly along the surface of the fields, to promote health and vegetation. The coolness of the evening invites to rest ; and the freshness of the morning renews for labour.

Such are the delights of the habitation that has been assigned to man : without any one of these, he must have been wretched ; and none of these could his own industry have supplied. But while many of his wants are thus kindly furnished, on the one hand, there are numberless inconveniences to excite his industry, on the other. This habitation, though provided with all the conveniences of air, pasturage, and water is but a desert place, without human cultivation.—The lowest animal finds more conveniences in the wilds of nature, than he who boasts himself their lord. The whirlwind, the inundation, and all the asperities

of the air, are peculiarly terrible to man, who knows their consequences, and, at a distance, dreads their approach. The earth itself, where human art has not pervaded, puts on a frightful, gloomy appearance. The forests are dark and tangled; the meadows are overgrown with rank weeds; and the brooks stray without a determined channel. Nature, that has been kind to every lower order of beings, seems to have been neglectful with regard to him: to the savage uncontriving man, the earth is an abode of desolation; where his shelter is insufficient, and his food precarious.

A world thus furnished with advantages on one side, and inconveniences on the other, is the proper abode of reason, and the fittest to exercise the industry of a free and a thinking creature. These evils, which art can remedy, and prudence guard against, are a proper call for the exertion of his faculties; and they tend still more to assimilate him to his Creator. God beholds, with pleasure, that being which he has made, converting the wretchedness of his natural situation into a theatre of triumph; bringing all the headlong tribes of nature into subjection to his will; and producing that order and uniformity upon earth, of which his own heavenly fabric is so bright an example.

GOLDSMITH.

SECTION II.

An eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

IN the year 1717, in the middle of April, with much difficulty I reached the top of mount Vesuvius,

in which I saw a vast aperture full of smoke, that hindered me from seeing its depth and figure. I heard within that horrid gulph extraordinary sounds, which seemed to proceed from the bowels of the mountain, and, at intervals, a noise like that of thunder or cannon, with a clattering like the falling of tiles from the tops of houses into the streets. Sometimes, as the wind changed, the smoke grew thinner, discovering a very ruddy flame, and the circumference of the crater streaked with red and several shades of yellow. After an hour's stay, the smoke being moved by the wind, we had short and partial prospects of the great hollow; in the flat bottom of which I could discern two furnaces almost contiguous: that on the left, seeming about three yards over, glowing with ruddy flame, and throwing up red hot stones, with a hideous noise, which, as they fell back, caused the clattering already taken notice of. May 8, in the morning, I ascended the top of Vesuvius a second time, and found a different face of things. The smoke ascending upright, afforded a full prospect of the crater, which, as far as I could judge, was about a mile in circumference, and a hundred yards deep. Since my last visit, a conical mount had been formed in the middle of the bottom. This was made by the stones, thrown up and fallen back again into the crater. In this new hill remained the two furnaces already mentioned. The one was seen to throw up every three or four minutes, with a dreadful sound, a vast number of red hot stones, at least three hundred feet higher than my head: but as there was no wind, they fell perpendicularly back from whence they had been discharged. The other was filled with red hot liquid matter, like that in the fur-

nance of a glass house ; raging and working like the waves of the sea, with a short abrupt noise. This matter sometimes boiled over, and ran down the side of the conical hill, appearing at first red hot, but changing colour as it hardened and cooled. Had the wind set towards us, we should have been in no small danger of being stifled by the sulphurous smoke, or killed by the masses of melted minerals, that were shot from the bottom. But as the wind was favourable, I had an opportunity of surveying this amazing scene for above an hour and an half together. On the fifth of June, after a horrid noise, the mountain was seen at Naples to work over ; and about three days after, its thunders were renewed so, that not only the windows in the city, but all the houses shook. From that time, it continued to overflow, and sometimes at night exhibited columns of fire shooting upward from its summit. On the tenth, when all was thought to be over, the mountain again renewed its terrors, roaring and raging most violently. One cannot form a juster idea of the noise, in the most violent fits of it, than by imagining a mixed sound, made up of the raging of a tempest, the murmur of a troubled sea, and the roaring of thunder and artillery, confused all together. Though we heard this at the distance of twelve miles, yet it was very terrible. We resolved to approach nearer to the mountain ; and, accordingly, three or four of us entered a boat and were set ashore at a little town, situated at the foot of the mountain. From thence we rode about four or five miles, before we came to the torrent of fire that was descending from the side of the volcano ; and here the roaring grew exceedingly loud and terrible. I observed a mixture of colours in the

cloud, above the crater, green, yellow, red, blue. There was likewise a ruddy dismal light in the air, over that tract where the burning river flowed. These circumstances, set off and augmented by the horror of the night, formed a scene the most uncommon and astonishing I ever saw ; which still increased as we approached the burning river. A vast torrent of liquid fire rolled from the top down the side of the mountain, and with irresistible fury bore down and consumed vines, olives, and houses ; and divided into different channels, according to the inequalities of the mountain. The largest stream seemed at least half a mile broad, and five miles long. I walked before my companions so far up the mountain, along the side of the river of fire, that I was obliged to retire in great haste, the sulphurous stream having surprised me, and almost taken away my breath. During our return, which was about three o'clock in the morning, the roaring of the mountain was heard all the way, while we observed it throwing up huge spouts of fire and burning stones, which falling, resembled the stars in a rocket. Sometimes I observed two or three distinct columns of flame, and sometimes one only that was large enough to fill the whole crater. These burning columns, and fiery stones, seemed to be shot a thousand feet perpendicular above the summit of the volcano. In this manner the mountain continued raging for six or eight days after. On the eighteenth of the same month the whole appearance ended, and Vesuvius remained perfectly quiet, without any visible smoke or flame.

BISHOP BERKELEY.

SECTION III.

Description of the preparations made by XERXES, the Persian monarch, for invading Greece.

IN the opening of spring, Xerxes directed his march towards the Hellespont, where his fleet lay in all their pomp, expecting his arrival. Here being arrived, he was desirous of taking a survey of all his forces, which formed an army that was never equalled either before or since. It was composed of the most powerful nations of the East, and of people scarcely known to posterity, except by name. The remotest India contributed its supplies, while the coldest tracts of Scythia sent their assistance. Medes, Persians, Bactrians, Lydians, Assyrians, Hyrcanians, and many other nations of various forms, complexions, languages, dresses, and arms, united in this grand expedition. The land army, which he brought out of Asia, consisted of seventeen hundred thousand foot, and four-score thousand horse. Three hundred thousand more that were added upon crossing the Hellespont, made his land forces all together amount to above two millions of men. His fleet, when it set out from Asia, consisted of twelve hundred and seven vessels, each carrying two hundred men. The Europeans augmented his fleet with an hundred and twenty vessels, each of which carried two hundred men. Besides these there were two thousand smaller vessels fitted for carrying provisions and stores. The men contained in these, with the former, amounted to six hundred thousand; so that the whole army might be said to amount to two millions and a

half ; which, with the women, slaves, and futtlers, always accompanying a Persian army, might make the whole above five millions of souls : a number, if rightly conducted, capable of overturning the greatest monarchy ; but commanded by presumption and ignorance, served only to obstruct and embarrass each other.

Lord of so many and such various subjects, Xerxes found a pleasure in reviewing his forces ; and was desirous of beholding a naval engagement, of which he had not hitherto been a spectator. To this end a throne was erected for him upon an eminence ; and in that situation beholding all the earth covered with his troops, and all the sea crowded with his vessels, he felt a secret joy diffuse itself through his frame, from the consciousness of his own superior power. But all the workings of this monarch's mind were in the extreme : a sudden sadness soon took place of his pleasure ; and dissolving in a shower of tears, he gave himself up to a reflection, that not one of so many thousand would be alive a hundred years after.

Artabanus, the king's uncle, who embraced opportunities of moralizing upon every occurrence, took this occasion to discourse with him upon the shortness and miseries of human life. Finding this more distant subject attended to, he spoke closely to the present occasion ; insinuated his doubts of the success of the expedition ; urged the many inconveniences the army had to suffer, if not from the enemy, at least from their own numbers. He alleged that plagues, famine, and confusion, were the necessary attendants of such ungovernable multitudes ; and that empty fame was the only reward of success. But it was now too late to turn this young monarch from his purpose. Xerxes in-

formed his monitor, that great actions were always attended with proportionable danger: and that if his predecessors had observed such scrupulous and timorous rules of conduct, the Persian empire would never have attained to its present height of glory.

Xerxes, in the mean time, had given orders to build a bridge of boats across the Hellespont, for transporting his army into Europe. This narrow strait, which now goes by the name of the Dardanel, is nearly an English mile over. But soon after the completion of this work, a violent storm arising, the whole was broken and destroyed, and the labour was to be undertaken anew. The fury of Xerxes upon this disappointment was attended with equal extravagance and cruelty. His vengeance knew no bounds. The workmen who had undertaken the task, had their heads struck off by his order; and that the sea itself might also know its duty, he ordered it to be lashed as a delinquent, and a pair of fetters to be thrown into it to curb its future irregularities. Thus having given vent to his absurd resentment, two bridges were ordered to be built in the place of the former, one for the army to pass over, and the other for the baggage and the beasts of burden. The workmen, now warned by the fate of their predecessors, undertook to give their labours greater stability. They placed three hundred and sixty vessels across the straits, some of them having three banks of oars, and others fifty oars a piece. They then cast large anchors into the water on both sides, in order to fix these vessels against the violence of the winds, and the current. After this they drove large piles into the earth, with huge rings fastened to them, to which were tied six vast cables that went over each of the two bridges.—

Over all these they laid trunks of trees, cut purposely for that use, and flat boats again over them fastened and joined together, so as to serve for a floor or solid bottom. When the whole work was thus completed, a day was appointed for their passing over ; and as soon as the first rays of the sun began to appear, sweet odours of all kinds were abundantly scattered over the new work, and the way was strewed with myrtle. At the same time Xerxes poured out libations into the sea ; and turning his face towards the East, worshipped that bright luminary, which is the God of the Persians. Then, throwing the vessel which had held his libation into the sea, together with a golden cup and Persian scimitar, he went forward, and gave orders for the army to follow. This immense train was seven days and seven nights in passing over ; while those who were appointed to conduct the march, quickened the troops by lashing them along ; for the soldiers of the East, at that time and to this very day, are treated like slaves.

This great army having landed in Europe, and being joined there by the several nations that acknowledged the Persian power, Xerxes prepared for marching directly forward into Greece. After a variety of disastrous and adverse events, suffered in prosecuting his vain-glorious design, this haughty monarch was compelled to relinquish it. Leaving his generals to take care of the army, he hastened with a small retinue to the sea-side. When he arrived at the place, he found the bridge broken down by the violence of the waves, in a tempest that had lately happened there. He was, therefore, obliged to pass the strait in a small boat ; which manner of returning, being compared with the often-

tatious method in which he had set out, rendered his disgrace still more poignant and afflicting. The army which he had ordered to follow him, having been unprovided with necessaries, suffered great hardships by the way. After having consumed all the corn they could find, they were obliged to live upon herbs, and even upon the bark and leaves of trees. Thus harassed and fatigued, a pestilence began to complete their misery; and, after a fatiguing journey of forty-five days, in which they were pursued rather by vultures and beasts of prey, than by men, they came to the Hellespont, where they had crossed over; and marched from thence to Sardis. Such was the end of Xerxes' expedition into Greece: a measure begun in pride, and terminated in infamy.

GOLDSMITH.

SECTION IV.

Character of Martin Luther.

As Luther was raised up by Providence to be the author of one of the greatest and most interesting revolutions recorded in history, there is not any person, perhaps, whose character has been drawn with such opposite colours. In his own age, one party, struck with horror and inflamed with rage, when they saw with what a daring hand he overturned every thing which they held to be sacred, or valued as beneficial, imputed to him not only all the defects and vices of a man, but the qualities of a demon. The other, warmed with admiration and gratitude, which they thought he merited, as the restorer of light and liberty to the Christian church, ascribed to him perfections

above the condition of humanity ; and viewed all his actions with a veneration bordering on that, which should be paid to those only who are guided by the immediate inspiration of Heaven. It is his own conduct, not the undistinguishing censure, nor the exaggerated praise of his contemporaries, which ought to regulate the opinions of the present age concerning him. Zeal for what he regarded as truth, undaunted intrepidity to maintain it, abilities both natural and acquired to defend it, and unwearied industry to propagate it, are virtues which shine so conspicuously in every part of his behaviour, that even his enemies must allow him to have possessed them in an eminent degree. To these may be added, with equal justice, such purity, and even austerity of manners, as became one who assumed the character of a reformer ; such sanctity of life as suited the doctrine which he delivered ; and such perfect disinterestedness, as affords no slight presumption of his sincerity. Superior to all selfish considerations, a stranger to the elegances of life, and despising its pleasures, he left the honours and emoluments of the church to his disciples ; remaining satisfied himself in his original state of professor in the university, and pastor to the town of Wittemberg, with the moderate appointments annexed to these offices.

His extraordinary qualities were alloyed with no inconsiderable mixture of human frailty, and human passions. These, however, were of such a nature, that they cannot be imputed to malevolence or corruption of heart, but seem to have taken their rise from the same source with many of his virtues. His mind, forcible and vehement in all its operations, roused by great objects, or agitated by violent passions, broke

out, on many occasions, with an impetuosity which astonishes men of feeblér spirits, or such as are placed in a more tranquil situation. By carrying some praiseworthy dispositions to excess, he bordered sometimes on what was culpable, and was often betrayed into actions which exposed him to censure. His confidence that his own opinions were well founded, approached to arrogance; his courage in asserting them, to rashness; his firmness in adhering to them, to obstinacy; and his zeal in confuting his adversaries, to rage and scurrility. Accustomed himself to consider every thing as subordinate to truth, he expected the same deference for it from other men; and, without making any allowances for their timidity or prejudices, he poured forth, against those who disappointed him in this particular, a torrent of invective mingled with contempt. Regardless of any distinction of rank or character, when his doctrines were attacked, he chastised all his adversaries, indiscriminately, with the same rough hand: neither the royal dignity of Henry VIII. nor the eminent learning and ability of Erasmus, screened them from the abuse with which he treated Tetzels or Eccius. But these indecencies of which Luther was guilty, must not be imputed wholly to the violence of his temper. They ought to be charged in part on the manner of the age. Among a rude people, unacquainted with those maxims, which, by putting continual restraint on the passions of individuals, have polished society, and rendered it agreeable, disputes of every kind were managed with heat, and strong emotions were uttered in their natural language, without reserve or delicacy. At the same time, the works of learned men were all composed in Latin; and they

were not only authoris'd, by the example of eminent writers in that language, to use their antagonists with the most illiberal scurrility ; but, in a dead tongue, indecencies of every kind appear less shocking than in a living language, whose idioms and phrases seem gross, because they are familiar.

In passing judgment upon the characters of men, we ought to try them by the principles and maxims of their own age, not by those of another. For although virtue and vice are at all times the same, manners and customs vary continually. Some parts of Luther's behaviour, which to us appear most culpable, gave no disgust to his contemporaries. It was even by some of those qualities which we are now apt to blame, that he was fitted for accomplishing the great work which he undertook. To rouse mankind, when sunk in ignorance or superstition, and to encounter the rage of bigotry armed with power, required the utmost vehemence of zeal, and a temper daring to excess. A gentle call would neither have reached, nor have excited those to whom it was address'd. A spirit, more amiable, but less vigorous than Luther's, would have shrunk back from the dangers which he braved and surmounted. Towards the close of Luthers' life, though without a perceptible declension of his zeal or abilities, the infirmities of his temper increased upon him, so that he daily grew more peevish, more irascible, and more impatient of contradiction. Having lived to be witness of his own amazing success ; to see a great part of Europe embrace his doctrine ; and to shake the foundation of the Papal throne, before which the mightiest monarchs had trembled, he discovered, on some occasions, symptoms of vanity and self-applause. He must

have been indeed more than man, if, upon contemplating all that he actually accomplished, he had never felt any sentiment of this kind rising in his breast.

Some time before his death he felt his strength declining, his constitution being worn out by a prodigious multiplicity of business, added to the labour of discharging his ministerial function with unremitting diligence, to the fatigue of constant study, besides the composition of works as voluminous as if he had enjoyed uninterrupted leisure and retirement. His natural intrepidity did not forsake him at the approach of death. His last conversation with his friends was concerning the happiness reserved for good men in a future world ; of which he spoke with the fervour and delight natural to one, who expected and wished to enter soon upon the enjoyment of it. ROBERTSON.

SECTION V.

The good and the bad man compared in the season of Adversity.

RELIGION prepares the mind for encountering, with fortitude, the most severe shocks of adversity ; whereas vice, by its natural influence on the temper, tends to produce dejection under the slightest trials. While worldly men enlarge their possessions, and extend their connexions, they imagine that they are strengthening themselves against all the possible vicissitudes of life. They say in their hearts, "My mountain stands strong, and I shall never be moved." But so fatal is their delusion, that, instead of strengthening, they are weakening that which only can support them when those vicissitudes come. It is their mind which must then support them ; and their mind, by their sen-

sual attachments, is corrupted and enfeebled. Addicted with intemperate fondness to the pleasures of the world, they incur two great and certain evils; they both exclude themselves from every resource except the world; and they increase their sensibility to every blow which comes upon them from that quarter.

They have neither principles nor temper which can stand the assault of trouble. They have no principles which lead them to look beyond the ordinary rotation of events; and therefore, when misfortunes involve them, the prospect must be comfortless on every side. Their crimes have disqualified them from looking up to the assistance of any higher power than their own ability, or for relying on any better guide than their own wisdom. And as from principle they can derive no support, so in a temper corrupted by prosperity they find no relief. They have lost that moderation of mind which enables a wise man to accommodate himself to his situation. Long fed with false hopes, they are exasperated and stung by every disappointment. Luxurious and effeminate, they can bear no uneasiness. Proud and presumptuous, they can brook no opposition. By nourishing dispositions which so little suit this uncertain state, they have infused a double portion of bitterness into the cup of woe; they have sharpened the edge of that sword which is lifted up to smite them. Strangers to all the temperate satisfactions of a good and a pure mind; strangers to every pleasure except what was seasoned by vice or vanity, their adversity is to the last degree disconsolate. Health and opulence were the two pillars on which they rested. Shake either of them; and their whole edifice of hope and comfort falls. Prostrate and forlorn, they are left

on the ground ; obliged to join with the man of Ephraim in his abject lamentation, “ They have taken away my gods, which I have made, and what have I more ? ” — Such are the causes to which we must ascribe the broken spirits, the peevish temper, and impatient passions, that so often attend the declining age, or falling fortunes of vicious men.

But how different is the condition of a truly good man in those trying situations of life ! Religion had gradually prepared his mind for all the events of this inconstant state. It had instructed him in the nature of true happiness. It had early weaned him from an undue love of the world, by discovering to him its vanity, and by setting higher prospects in his view. Afflictions do not attack him by surprise, and therefore do not overwhelm him. He was equipped for the storm, as well as the calm, in this dubious navigation of life. Under those conditions he knew himself to be brought hither ; that he was not always to retain the enjoyment of what he loved : and therefore he is not overcome by disappointment, when that which is mortal, dies ; when that which is mutable, begins to change ; and when that which he knew to be transient, passes away.

All the principles which religion teaches, and all the habits which it forms, are favourable to strength of mind. It will be found, that whatever purifies, fortifies also the heart. In the course of living “ righteously, soberly, and piously,” a good man acquires a steady and well-governed spirit. Trained, by Divine grace, to enjoy with moderation the advantages of the world, neither lifted up by success, nor enervated with sensuality, he meets the changes in his lot without unmanly dejection. He is inured to temperance and re-

straint. He has learned firmness and self-command. He is accustomed to look up to that Supreme Providence, which disposes of human affairs, not with reverence only, but with trust and hope.

The time of prosperity was to him not merely a season of barren joy, but productive of much useful improvement. He had cultivated his mind. He had stored it with useful knowledge, with good principles, and virtuous dispositions. These resources remain entire, when the days of trouble come. They remain with him in sickness, as in health; in poverty, as in the midst of riches; in his dark and solitary hours, no less than when surrounded with friends and gay society. From the glare of prosperity, he can, without dejection, withdraw into the shade. Excluded from several advantages of the world, he may be obliged to retreat into a narrower circle; but within that circle he will find many comforts left. His chief pleasures were always of the calm, innocent, and temperate kind; and over these the changes of the world have the least power. His mind is a kingdom to him; and he can still enjoy it. The world did not bestow upon him all his enjoyments; and therefore it is not in the power of the world, by its most cruel attacks, to carry them all away.

BLAIR.

SECTION VI.

The nature of true devotion.

DEVOTION is the lively exercise of those affections, which we owe to the Supreme Being. It comprehends several emotions of the heart, which all terminate on the same great object. The chief of them are, veneration, gratitude, desire, and resignation.

It implies, first, profound veneration of God. By veneration, I understand, an affection compounded of awe and love ; the affection, which, of all others, it best becomes creatures to bear towards their infinitely perfect Creator. Awe is the first sentiment that rises in the soul, at the view of his greatness. But, in the heart of a devout man, it is a solemn and elevating, not a dejecting, emotion ; for he glows rather than trembles, in the Divine presence. It is not the superstitious dread of unknown power, but the homage yielded by the heart to him who is, at once, the greatest and the best of Beings. Omnipotence, viewed alone, would be a formidable object. But, considered in conjunction with the moral perfections of the Divine nature, it serves to heighten devotion. Goodness affects the heart with double energy, when residing in One so exalted. The goodness which we adore in him, is not like that which is common among men, a weak, mutable, undiscerning fondness, ill qualified to be the ground of assured trust. It is the goodness of a perfect Governor, acting upon a regular extensive plan ; a steady principle of benevolence, conducted by wisdom ; which, subject to no “variableness or shadow of turning,” free from all partiality and caprice, incapable of being either soothed by flattery, or ruffled by resentment, resembles, in its calm and equal lustre, the eternal serenity of the highest heavens.

Such are the conceptions of the great God, which fill with veneration the heart of a devout man. His veneration is not confined to acts of immediate worship. It is the habitual temper of his soul. Not only when engaged in prayer or praise, but in the silence of retirement, and even amidst the occupations of the world, the Divine Being dwells upon his thoughts.

No place or object appears to him void of God. On the works of nature, he views the impresson of his hand; and in the actions of men he traces the operation of his Providence. Whatever he beholds on earth, that is beautiful or fair, that is great or good, he refers to God, as to the supreme origin of all the excellence which is scattered throughout his works. From those effects, he rises to the first cause. From those streams, he ascends to the fountain whence they flow. By those rays, he is led to that eternal source of light in which they centre.

Devotion implies, secondly, sincere gratitude to God, for all his benefits. This is a warmer emotion than simple veneration. Veneration looks up to the Deity, as he is in himself; gratitude regards what he is towards us. When a devout man surveys this vast universe, where beauty and goodness are every where predominant; when he reflects on those numberless multitudes of creatures, who, in their different stations, enjoy the blessings of existence; and when at the same time he looks up to a Universal Father, who hath thus filled creation with life and happiness, his heart glows within him. He adores that disinterested goodness, which prompted the Almighty to raise up so many orders of intelligent beings, not that he might receive, but that he might give and impart; that he might pour forth himself, and communicate to the spirits which he formed, some emanations of his felicity.

The goodness of this Supreme Benefactor he gratefully contemplates, as displayed in his own state. He reviews the events of his life; and in every comfort which has sweetened it, he discerns the Divine hand. Does he remember with affection the parents under

whose care he grew up, and the companions with whom he passed his youthful life? Is he now happy, in his family rising around him; in the spouse who loves him, or in the children who give him comfort and joy? Into every tender remembrance of the past and every pleasing enjoyment of the present, devotion enters; for in all those beloved objects, it recognises God. The communication of love from heart to heart, is an effusion of his goodness. From his inspiration, descends all the friendship which ever glowed on earth; and therefore, to him it justly returns in gratitude, and terminates in him.

But this life, with all its interests, is but a small part of human existence. A devout man looks forward to immortality, and discovers still higher subjects of gratitude. He views himself as a guilty creature, whom Divine benignity has received into grace; whose forfeited hopes it has restored; and to whom it has opened the most glorious prospects of future felicity. Such generosity shown to the fallen and miserable, is yet more affecting to the heart, than favours conferred on the innocent. He contemplates, with astonishment, the labours of the son of God, in accomplishing redemption for men; and his soul overflows with thankfulness to Him, “who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.—What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindness, and with tender mercies.”

Devotion implies, thirdly, the desire of the soul after the favour of the Supreme Being, as its chief good, and final rest. To inferior enjoyments, the de-

vout man allots inferior and secondary attachment.— He disclaims not every earthly affection. He pretends not to renounce all pleasure in the comforts of his present state. Such an unnatural renunciation humanity forbids, and religion cannot require. But from these he expects not his supreme bliss. He discerns the vanity which belongs to them all ; and beyond the circle of mutable objects which surround him, he aspires after some principles of more perfect felicity, which shall not be subject to change or decay. But where is this complete and permanent good to be found ? Ambition pursues it in courts and palaces, and returns from the pursuit, loaded with sorrows. Pleasure seeks it among sensual joys ; and retires with the confession of disappointment. True happiness dwells with God ; and from “ the light of his countenance,” it beams upon the devout man. His voice is, “ whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” After exploring heaven and earth for happiness, they seem to him a mighty void, a wilderness of shadows, where all would be empty and unsubstantial without God. But in his favour and love, he finds what supplies every defect of temporal objects and assures tranquillity to his heart, amidst all the changes of his existence.

From these sentiments and affections, devotion advances, fourthly, to an entire resignation of the soul to God. It is the consummation of trust and hope. It banishes anxious cares, and murmuring thoughts. It reconciles us to every appointment of Divine Providence ; and resolves every wish into the desire of pleasing him, whom our hearts adore. Its genuine breathings are to this effect : “ Conduct me, O God !

in what path soever seemeth good to thee. In nothing shall I ever arraign thy sacred will. Dost thou require me to part with any worldly advantages, for the sake of virtue and a good conscience? I give them up. Dost thou command me to relinquish my friends, or my country? At thy call I cheerfully leave them. Dost thou summon me away from this world? Lo! I am ready to depart. Thou hast made, thou hast redeemed me, and I am thine. Myself, and all that belongs to me, I surrender to thy disposal."

This, surely, is one of the noblest acts of which the human mind is capable, when thus, if we may be allowed the expression, it unites itself with God. Nor can any devotion be genuine, which inspires not sentiments of this nature. For devotion is not to be considered as a transient glow of affection, occasioned by some casual impressions of Divine goodness, which are suffered to remain unconnected with the conduct of life. It is a powerful principle, which penetrates the soul; which purifies the affections from debasing attachments; and, by a fixed and steady regard to God, subdues every sinful passion, and forms the inclinations to piety and virtue.

Such, in general, are the dispositions that constitute devotion. It is the union of veneration, gratitude, desire, and resignation. It expresses, not so much the performance of any particular duty, as the spirit which must animate all religious duties. It stands opposed, not merely to downright vice; but to a heart which is cold, and insensible to sacred things;—which, from compulsion perhaps, and a sense of interest, preserves some regard to the divine commands, but obeys them without ardour, love, or joy.

CHAPTER V.

PATHETIC PIECES.

SECTION I.

Execution of Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury.

QUEEN MARY determined to bring Cranmer, whom she had long detained in prison, to punishment ; and in order more fully to satiate her vengeance, she resolved to punish him for heresy, rather than for treason. He was cited by the Pope to stand his trial at Rome ; and though he was known to be kept in close custody at Oxford, he was, upon his not appearing, condemned as contumacious. Bonner, bishop of London, and Thirleby, bishop of Ely, were sent to degrade him ; and the former executed the melancholy ceremony, with all the joy and exultation which suited his savage nature. The implacable spirit of the Queen, not satisfied with the future misery of Cranmer, which she believed inevitable, and with the execution of that dreadful sentence to which he was condemned, prompted her also to seek the ruin of his honour, and the infamy of his name. Persons were employed to attack him, not in the way of disputation, against which he was sufficiently armed ; but by flattery, insinuation, and address ; by representing the dignities to which his character still entitled him, if he would merit them by a recantation ; by giving him hopes of long enjoying those powerful friends whom his beneficent disposition had attached to him, during the

course of his prosperity. Overcome by the fond love of life ; terrified by the prospect of those tortures which awaited him ; he allowed, in an unguarded hour, the sentiments of nature to prevail over his resolution, and agreed to subscribe the doctrines of the papal supremacy, and of the real presence. The court, equally perfidious and cruel, was determined that this recantation should avail him nothing ; and sent orders that he should be required to acknowledge his errors in church before the whole people ; and that he should thence be immediately carried to execution.

Cranmer, whether he had received a secret intimation of their design, or had repented of his weakness, surprised the audience by a contrary declaration. He said, that he was well apprised of the obedience which he owed to his sovereign and the laws ; but that this duty extended no farther than to submit patiently to their commands ; and to bear, without resistance whatever hardships they should impose upon him ; that a superior duty, the duty which he owed to his Maker, obliged him to speak truth on all occasions ; and not to relinquish, by a base denial, the holy doctrine which the Supreme Being had revealed to mankind : that there was one miscarriage in his life, of which, above all others, he severely repented ; the insincere declaration of faith to which he had the weakness to consent, and which the fear of death alone had extorted from him : that he took this opportunity of atoning for his error, by a sincere and open recantation ; and was willing to seal, with his blood, that doctrine which he firmly believed to be communicated from Heaven : and that, as his hand had erred, by betraying his heart, it should first be punished, by a severe but just doom, and should first pay the forfeit of its offences.

He was then led to the stake, amidst the insults of his enemies : and having now summoned up all the force of his mind, he bore their scorn, as well as the torture of his punishment, with singular fortitude. He stretched out his hand, and, without betraying, either by his countenance or motions, the least sign of weakness, or even of feeling, he held it in the flames till it was entirely consumed. His thoughts seemed wholly occupied with reflections on his former fault, and he called aloud several times, “ This hand has offended,” Satisfied with that atonement, he then discovered a serenity in his countenance ; and when the fire attacked his body, he seemed to be quite insensible of his outward sufferings, and by the force of hope and resolution, to have collected his mind, altogether within itself, and to repel the fury of the flames. He was undoubtedly a man of merit ; possessed of learning and capacity, and adorned with candour, sincerity, and beneficence, and all those virtues which were fitted to render him useful and amiable in society.

HUME.

SECTION II.

Christianity furnishes the best consolation under the evils of life.

IT is of great importance to contemplate the Christian religion in the light of consolation ; as bringing aid and relief to us amidst the distresses of life. Here our religion incontestably triumphs ; and its happy effects, in this respect, furnish a strong argument to every bene-

volent mind ; for wishing them to be further diffused throughout the world. For without the belief and hope afforded by Divine revelation, the circumstances of man are extremely forlorn. He finds himself placed here as a stranger in a vast universe, where the powers and operations of nature are very imperfectly known ; where both the beginnings and the issues of things are involved in mysterious darkness ; where he is unable to discover, with any certainty, whence he sprung, or for what purpose he was brought into this state of existence ; whether he is subjected to the government of a mild, or of a wrathful ruler ; what construction he is to put on many of the dispensations of his providence ; and what his fate is to be when he departs hence. What a disconsolate situation, to a serious inquiring mind ! The greater degree of virtue it possesses, the more its sensibility is likely to be oppressed by this burden of labouring thought. Even though it were in one's power to banish all uneasy thought, and to fill up the hours of life with perpetual amusement, life so filled up would, upon reflection, appear poor and trivial.— But these are far from being the terms upon which man is brought into this world. He is conscious that his being is frail and feeble ; he sees himself beset with various dangers ; and is exposed to many a melancholy apprehension, from the evils which he may have to encounter, before he arrives at the close of life. In this distressed condition, to reveal to him such discoveries of the Supreme Being as the Christian religion affords, is to reveal to him a father and a friend ; is to let in a ray of the most cheering light upon the darkness of the human state. He who was before a destitute orphan, wandering in the inhospitable desert

has now gained a shelter from the bitter and inclement blast. He now knows to whom to pray, and in whom to trust ; where to unbosom his sorrows ; and from what hand to look for relief.

It is certain, that when the heart bleeds from some wound of recent misfortune, nothing is of equal efficacy with religious comfort. It is of power to enlighten the darkest hour, and to assuage the severest woe, by the belief of Divine favour, and the prospect of a blessed immortality. In such hopes, the mind expatiates with joy ; and, when bereaved of its earthly friends, solaces itself with the thoughts of one Friend, who will never forsake it. Refined reasonings concerning the nature of the human condition, and the improvement which philosophy teaches us to make of every event, may entertain the mind when it is at ease ; may perhaps contribute to sooth it, when slightly touched with sorrow : but when it is torn with any sore distress, they are cold and feeble, compared with a direct promise from the Father of mercies. This is “ an anchor to the soul both sure and stedfast.” This has given consolation and refuge to many a virtuous heart, at a time when the most cogent reasonings would have proved utterly unavailing.

Upon the approach of death, when, if a man thinks at all, his anxiety about his future interests must naturally increase, the power of religious consolations is sensibly felt. Then appears, in the most striking light, the high value of the discoveries made by the gospel ; not only life and immortality revealed, but a Mediator with God discovered ; mercy proclaimed, through him, to the frailties of the penitent and the humble ; and his presence promised to be with them when they

are passing through “the valley of the shadow of death,” in order to bring them safe into unseen habitations of rest and joy. Here is ground for their leaving the world with comfort and peace. But in this severe and trying period, this labouring hour of nature, how shall the unhappy man support himself, who knows not, or believes not, the discoveries of religion? Secretly conscious to himself that he has not acted his part as he ought to have done, the sins of his past life arise before him in sad remembrance. He wishes to exist after death, and yet dreads that existence. The Governor of the world is unknown. He cannot tell whether every endeavour to obtain his mercy may not be in vain. All is awful obscurity around him; and, in the midst of endless doubts and perplexities, the trembling, reluctant soul is forced away from the body. As the misfortunes of life must, to such a man, have been most oppressive, so its end is bitter. His sun sets in a dark cloud; and the night of death closes over his head, full of misery.

BLAIR.

SECTION III.

Benefits to be derived from scenes of distress.

Some periods of sadness have, in our present situation, a just and natural place; and they are requisite to the true enjoyment of pleasure: but I shall at present decline considering the subject in this point of view; and confine myself to point out the direct effects of a proper attention to the distresses of life upon our moral and religious character.

In the first place, the house of mourning is calculated to give a proper check to our natural thoughtlessness

and levity. The indolence of mankind, and their love of pleasure, spread through all characters and ranks some degree of aversion to what is grave and serious. They grasp at any object, either of business or amusement, which makes the present moment pass smoothly away ; which carries their thoughts abroad, and saves them from the trouble of reflecting on themselves. With too many this passes into a habit of constant dissipation. If their fortune and rank allow them to indulge their inclinations, they devote themselves to the pursuit of amusement through all its different forms. The skilful arrangement of its successive scenes, and the preparatory study for shining in each, are the only exertions in which their understanding is employed. Such a mode of life may keep alive, for a while, a frivolous vivacity : it may improve men in some of those exterior accomplishments, which sparkle in the eyes of the giddy and the vain ; but it must sink them in the esteem of all the wise. It renders them strangers to themselves ; and useless, if not pernicious, to the world. They lose every manly principle. Their minds become relaxed and effeminate. All that is great or respectable in the human character is buried under a mass of trifles and follies.

If some measures ought to be taken for rescuing the mind from this disgraceful levity ; if some principles must be acquired, which may give more dignity and steadiness to conduct ; where are these to be looked for ? Not surely in the house of feasting, where every object flatters the senses, and strengthens the seductions to which we are already prone ; where the spirit of dissipation circulates from heart to heart ; and the children of folly mutually admire and are admired. It is

in the sober and serious house of mourning that the tide of vanity is made to turn, and a new direction given to the current of thought. When some affecting incident presents a strong discovery of the deceitfulness of all worldly joy, and rouses our sensibility to human woe ; when we behold those with whom we had lately mingled in the house of feasting, sunk by some of the sudden vicissitudes of life into the vale of misery ; or when, in sad silence, we stand by the friend whom we had loved as our own soul, stretched on the bed of death ; then is the season when the world begins to appear in a new light ; when the heart opens to virtuous sentiments, and is led into that train of reflection which ought to direct life. He who before knew not ~~what it~~ was to commune with his heart on any serious subject, now puts the question to himself, for what purpose he was sent forth into this mortal, transitory state ; what his fate is likely to be when it concludes ; and ~~what~~ judgment he ought to form of those pleasures which amuse for a little, but which, he now sees, cannot save the heart from anguish in the evil day. Touched by the hand of thoughtful melancholy, that airy edifice of bliss, which fancy had raised up for him, vanishes away. He beholds, in the place of it, the lonely and barren desert, in which, surrounded with many a disagreeable object, he is left musing upon himself. The time which he has mis-spent, and the faculties which he has misemployed, his foolish levity and his criminal pursuits, all rise in painful prospect before him. That unknown state of existence into which, race after race, the children of men pass, strikes his mind with solemn awe.—Is there no course by which he can retrieve his past errors ? Is there no superior

power to which he can look up for aid? Is there no plan of conduct which, if it exempt him not from sorrow, can at least procure him consolation amidst the distressful exigencies of life?--Such meditations as these, suggested by the house of mourning, frequently produce a change in the whole character. They revive those sparks of goodness which were nearly extinguished in the dissipated mind: and give rise to principles of conduct more rational in themselves, and more suitable to the human state.

In the next place, impressions of this nature not only produce moral seriousness, but awaken sentiments of piety, and bring men into the sanctuary of religion. One might, indeed, imagine that the blessings of a prosperous condition would prove the most natural incitements to devotion; and that when men were happy in themselves, and saw nothing but happiness around them, they could not fail gratefully to acknowledge that God who "giveth them all things richly to enjoy." Yet such is their corruption, that they are never more ready to forget their benefactor, than when loaded with his benefits. The giver is concealed from their careless and inattentive view, by the cloud of his own gifts. When their life continues to flow in one smooth current, unruffled by any griefs; when they neither receive in their own circumstances, nor allow themselves to receive from the circumstances of others, any admonitions of human instability, they not only become regardless of Providence, but are in hazard of contemning it. Glorifying in their strength, and lifted up by the pride of life into supposed independence, that impious sentiment, if not uttered by the mouth, yet too often lurks in the hearts of many during their flourish-

ing periods, “ What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit should we have if we pray unto him ?”

If such be the tendency of the house of feasting, how necessary is it that, by some change in their situation, men should be obliged to enter into the house of mourning, in order to recover a proper sense of their dependent state ! It is there, when forsaken by the gaieties of the world, and left alone with the Almighty, that we are made to perceive how awful his government is ; how easily human greatness bends before him ; and how quickly all our designs and measures, at his interposal, vanish into nothing. There, when the countenance is sad, and the affections are softened by grief ; when we sit apart, involved in serious thought ; looking down as from some eminence on those dark clouds that hang over the life of man, the arrogance of prosperity is humbled, and the heart melts under the impressions of religion. Formerly we were taught, but now we see, we feel, how much we stand in need of an Almighty Protector, amidst the changes of this vain world. Our soul cleaves to him who “ despises not, nor abhors the affliction of the afflicted.” Prayer flows forth of its own accord from the relenting heart, that he may be our God, and the God of our friends in distress ; that he may never forsake us while we are sojourning in this land of pilgrimage ; may strengthen us under its calamities, and bring us hereafter to those habitations of rest, where we, and they whom we love, may be delivered from the trials which all are now doomed to endure. The discoveries of his mercy, which he has made in the gospel of Christ, are viewed with joy, as so many rays of light sent down from above

to dispel, in some degree, the surrounding gloom. A Mediator and Intercessor with the Sovereign of the universe, appear comfortable names ; and the resurrection of the just becomes the powerful cordial of grief. In such moments as these, which we may justly call happy moments, the soul participates of all the pleasures of devotion. It feels the power of religion to support and relieve. It is softened, without being broken. It is full, and it pours itself forth ; pours itself forth, if we may be allowed to use the expression, into the bosom of its merciful Creator.

Enough has been said to show, that, on various occasions, “sorrow may be better than laughter.”—— Wouldst thou acquire the habit of recollection, and fix the principles of thy conduct ; wouldst thou be led up to thy Creator and Redeemer, and be formed to sentiments of piety and devotion ; wouldst thou be acquainted with those mild and tender affections which delight the compassionate and humane ; wouldst thou have the power of sensual appetites tamed and corrected, and thy soul raised above the ignoble love of life, and fear of death ? go, my brother, go—not to scenes of pleasure and riot, not to the house of feasting and mirth,—but to the silent house of mourning ; and adventure to dwell for a while among objects that will soften thy heart. Contemplate the lifeless remains of what once was fair and flourishing. Bring home to thyself the vicissitudes of life. Recall the remembrance of the friend, the parent, or the child, whom thou tenderly lovedst. Look back on the days of former years ; and think on the companions of thy youth, who now sleep in the dust. Let the vanity, the mutability, and the sorrows of the human state, rise in full prospect

before thee ; and though thy “ countenance may be made sad, thy heart shall be made better.” This sadness, though for the present it dejects, yet shall in the end fortify thy spirit ; inspiring thee with such sentiments, and prompting such resolutions as shall enable thee to enjoy, with more real advantage, the rest of life. Dispositions of this nature from one part of the character of those mourners whom our Saviour hath pronounced blessed , and of those to whom it is promised, that “ sowing in tears, they shall reap in joy.” A great difference there is between being serious and melancholy ; and a melancholy too there is of that kind which deserves to be sometimes indulged.

Religion hath, on the whole, provided for every good man abundant materials of consolation and relief. How dark soever the present face of nature may appear, it dispels the darkness, when it brings into view the entire system of things, and extends our survey to the whole kingdom of God. It represents what we now behold as only a part, and a small part, of the general order. It assures us, that though here, for wise ends, misery and sorrow are permitted to have place, these temporary evils shall, in the end, advance the happiness of all who love God, and are faithful to their duty. It shows them this mixed and confused scene vanishing by degrees away, and preparing the introduction of that state, where the house of mourning shall be shut up for ever ; where no tears are seen, and no groans heard ; where no hopes are frustrated, and no virtuous connexions dissolved ; but where, under the light of the Divine countenance, goodness shall flourish in perpetual felicity. Thus, though religion may occasionally chasten our mirth with sadness of counte-

nance, yet under that sadness it allows not the heart of good men to sink. It calls upon them to rejoice "because the Lord reigneth who is their Rock, and the most high God who is their Redeemer." Reason likewise joins her voice with that of religion; forbidding us to make peevish and unreasonable complaints of human life, or injuriously to ascribe to it more evil than it contains. Mixed as the present state is, she pronounces, that generally, if not always, there is more happiness than misery, more pleasure than pain, in the condition of man.

BLAIR.

SECTION IV.

Rome saved by the virtue of its female inhabitants.

Coriolanus was a distinguished Roman Senator and General, who had rendered eminent services to the Republic. He was at length treated with great severity and ingratitude, by the senate and people of Rome; and obliged to leave his country to preserve his life. Of a haughty and indignant spirit, he resolved to avenge himself; and, with this view, applied to the Volscians, the enemies of Rome, and tendered them his services against his native country. The offer was cordially embraced, and Coriolanus was made general of the Volscian army. He recovered from the Romans all the towns they had taken from the Volsci; carried by assaults several cities in Latium; and led his troops within five miles of the city of Rome. After several unsuccessful embassies from the senate, all hope of pacifying the injured exile appeared to be extinguished; and the sole business at Rome was to prepare, with the

utmost diligence, for sustaining a siege. The young and able-bodied men had instantly the guard of the gates and trenches assigned to them ; while those of the veterans, who, though exempt by their age from bearing arms, were yet capable of service, undertook the defence of the ramparts. The women, in the meanwhile, terrified, by these movements, and the impending danger, into a neglect of their wonted decorum, ran tumultuously from their houses to the temples. Every sanctuary, and especially the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, resounded with the wailings and loud supplications of women, prostrate before the statues of their divinities. In this general consternation and distress, Valeria, (sister of the famous Valerius Poplicola,) as if moved by a divine impulse, suddenly took her stand upon the top of the steps of the temple of Jupiter, assembled the women about her, and having first exhorted them not to be terrified by the greatness of the present danger, confidently declared, “ That there was yet hope for the republic ; that its preservation depended upon them, ” and upon their performance of the duty they owed their country. ” — “ Alas ! (cried out one of the company,) what resource can there be in the weakness of wretched women, when our bravest men, our ablest warriors themselves despair ? ” — “ it is not by the sword, nor by strength of arm (replied Valeria) that we are to prevail ; these belong not to our sex. Soft moving words must be our weapons and our force. Let us all, in our mourning attire, and accompanied by our children, go and intreat Veturia, the mother of Coriolanus, to intercede with her son for our common country. Veturia’s prayers will bend his soul to pity. Haughty and implacable as he has hitherto appeared, he has not a heart so cruel and obdurate, as not to re-

lent, when he shall see his mother, his revered, his beloved mother, a weeping suppliant at his feet."

This motion being universally applauded, the whole train of women took their way to Veturia's house. Her son's wife, Volumnia, who was sitting with her when they arrived, and greatly surpris'd at their coming, hastily asked them the meaning of so extraordinary an appearance. "What is it," said she; "what can be the motive that has brought such a numerous company of visitors to this house of sorrow?"

Valeria then address'd herself to the mother: "It is to you, Veturia, that these women have recourse in the extreme peril, with which they and their children are threatened. They intreat, implore, conjure you to compassionate their distress, and the distress of our common country. Suffer not Rome to become a prey to the Volsci, and our enemies to triumph over our liberty. Go to the camp of Coriolanus; take with you Volumnia and her two sons: let that excellent wife join her intercession to yours. Permit these women with their children to accompany you: they will all cast themselves at his feet. O Veturia, conjure him to grant peace to his fellow-citizens. Cease not to beg till you have obtained. So good a man can never withstand your tears: our only hope is in you. Come then, Veturia; the danger presses; you have no time for deliberation; the enterprize is worthy of your virtue: Heaven will crown it with success; Rome shall once more owe its preservation to our sex. You will justly acquire to yourself an immortal fame, and have the pleasure to make every one of us a sharer in your glory.'

Veturia, after a short silence, with tears in her eyes,

answered : “ Weak indeed is the foundation of your hope Valeria, when you place it in the aid of two miserable women. We are not wanting in affection to our country, nor need we any remonstrance or intreaties to excite our zeal for its preservation. It is the power only of being serviceable that fails us. Ever since that unfortunate hour, when the people in their madness so unjustly banished Coriolanus, his heart has been no less estranged from his family than from his country. You will be convinced of this sad truth by his own words to us at parting. When he returned home from the assembly, where he had been condemned, he found us in the depth of affliction, bewailing the miseries that were sure to follow our being deprived of so dear a son, and so excellent a husband. We had his children upon our knees. He kept himself at a distance from us ; and, when he had a while stood silent, motionless as a rock, his eyes fixed, and without shedding a tear ; ‘ ’tis done,’ he said.—‘ O mother, and thou Volumnia, the best of wives, to you Marcius is no more. I am banished hence for my affection to my country, and the services I have done it. I go this instant ; and I leave for ever a city, where all good men are proscribed. Support this blow of fortune with the magnanimity that becomes women of your high rank and virtue. I commend my children to your care. Educate them in a manner worthy of you, and of the race from which they come. Heaven grant, they may be more fortunate than their father, and never fall short of him in virtue ; and may you in them find your consolation !—Farewell.’

“ We started up at the sound of this word, and with loud cries of lamentation ran to him to receive his

last embraces. I led his elder son by the hand, Volumnia had the younger in her arms. He turned his eyes from us, and putting us back with his hand, ‘Mother,’ said he, ‘from this moment you have no son: our country has taken from you the stay of your old age.—Nor to you, Volumnia, will Marcius be henceforth a husband; mayst thou be happy with another, more fortunate!—My dear children, you have lost your father.’

“He said no more, but instantly broke away from us. He departed from Rome without settling his domestic affairs, or leaving any orders about them; without money, without servants, and even without letting us know, to what part of the world he would direct his steps. It is now the fourth year since he went away; and he has never inquired after his family, nor, by letter or messenger, given us the least account of himself; so that it seems as if his mother and his wife were the chief objects of that general hatred which he shows to his country.

“What success then can you expect from our intreaties to a man so implacable? Can two women bend that stubborn heart, which even all the ministers of religion were not able to soften? And indeed what shall I say to him! What can I reasonably desire of him? that he would pardon ungrateful citizens, who have treated him as the vilest criminal? that he would take compassion upon a furious, unjust populace, which had no regard for his innocence? and that he would betray a nation, which has not only opened him an asylum, but has even preferred him to her most illustrious citizens in the command of her armies? With what face can I ask him to abandon such generous protectors, and deliver himself again into the hands of his

most bitter enemies? Can a Roman mother, and a Roman wife, with decency, exact, from a son and a husband, compliances which must dishonour him before both gods and men? Mournful circumstance, in which we have not power to hate the most formidable enemy of our country! Leave us therefore to our unhappy destiny; and do not desire us to make it more unhappy by an action that may cast a blemish upon our virtue."

The women made no answer but by their tears and intreaties. Some embraced her knees; others beseeched Volumnia to join her prayers to theirs; all conjured Veturia not to refuse her country this last assistance. Overcome at length by their urgent solicitations, she promised to do as they desired.

The very next day all the most illustrious of the Roman women repaired to Veturia's house. There they presently mounted a number of chariots, which the consuls had ordered to be made ready for them, and, without any guard, took the way to the enemy's camp.

Coriolanus, perceiving from afar that long train of chariots, sent out some horsemen to learn the design of it. They quickly brought him word, that it was his mother, his wife, and a great number of other women, and their children, coming to the camp. He doubtless conjectured what views the Romans had in so extraordinary a deputation: that this was the last expedient of the senate; and, in his own mind, he determined not to let himself be moved. But he reckoned upon a savage inflexibility that was not in his nature: for, going out with a few attendants to receive the women, he no sooner beheld Veturia attired in mourning, her eyes bathed in tears, and with a countenance and motion

that spoke her sinking under a load of sorrow, than he ran hastily to her ; and not only calling her mother, but adding to that word the most tender epithets, embraced her, wept over her, and held her in his arms to prevent her falling. The like tenderness he presently after expressed to his wife, highly commending her discretion in having constantly stayed with his mother, since his departure from Rome. And then, with the warmest paternal affection, he caressed his children.

SECTION V.

The same subject continued.

WHEN some time had been allowed to those silent tears of joy, which often flow plenteously at the sudden and unexpected meeting of persons dear to each other, Veturia entered upon the business she had undertaken. “ I am not come to solicit thee, my son, to betray a people who have given thee so generous a reception, and even confided their arms to thy conduct. Nor do I wish that thou shouldst make a separate peace for thyself without the consent of the whole nation. Veturia is incapable of urging her son to any base action. Grant us only a truce for a year, that, in this interval, a solid peace may be negotiated, an alliance that may be firm and durable, and equally advantageous to both nations. You, who are versed in public affairs, can have no difficulty to persuade the Volsci, that a peace, upon such fair conditions as they may now be certain to obtain, is preferable to a war, the final event of which is still uncertain. But if, elated by the success they have had under your guidance, and imagining

that fortune must always favour them, they refuse to listen to your remonstrances, what prevents you from publicly resigning your commission of general? Let all be open; no disguise, no breach of trust, no treachery to your new friends: but then, beware, my son, of impiously continuing an enemy to those, with whom you have a yet more near relation.—Nor let the apprehension of appearing ungrateful to your benefactors restrain you from complying with my request. Have not the Volsci been sufficiently recompensed by the many signal and important services you have done them? Liberty was their sole ambition. You have not only procured them liberty, but have raised them to so high a pitch of prosperity, that they are now considering whether it will be more advisable totally to suppress the Roman power, or to live with us in a state of equality, the two nations under one and the same government. Can you imagine, that thus benefitted, thus exalted by your aid, they will resent as an injury, your not sacrificing to them your own country, your not imbruing your hands in the blood of your fellow-citizens?—You will tell me, perhaps, that you hate your country. But are you not unreasonable in so doing? When the Romans unjustly condemned you to banishment, was Rome in its natural state? Was it governed by the laws of our forefathers? Was not the republic agitated by a violent storm? Were not the members of it distempered? Not all indeed; for they were not all of one mind. It was only the baser and more corrupt part of the citizens that voted against you; and they were incited by the pernicious counsels of their leaders, those enemies to all good men. But had it been otherwise, had all the citizens unanimously

combined to banish you, as a man dangerous to the state on account of his mischievous politics, would it be therefore allowable for you to revenge yourself in this manner? Many others, whose intentions, in the administration of public affairs, were no less upright than yours, have been as unjustly and hardly treated as you : you will find few good magistrates whose shining merit has not excited envy ; and yet those worthy men suffered their disgraces with temper, considered them as in the number of those evils to which, by the condition of humanity, they were inevitably exposed ; and, removing into foreign countries, carried thither no resentment, no malice against their own. Who was ever more injuriously treated than Tarquinius Collatinus ? When with an honest zeal, and with all his power, he had assisted in delivering Rome from the tyranny of the Tarquins, he was himself banished thence, upon a false accusation of plotting to re-establish that tyranny. He retired to Lavinium, and there passed the remainder of his days in tranquillity, without ever attempting any thing that could give credit to the calumnies so maliciously vented against him.

But if you will have it so, I shall suppose that every man who suffers an injury, be it from friends or enemies, his countrymen or strangers, has a right to revenge himself. Have you not sufficiently punished those, who by their unjust usage of you, provoked your anger? Our colonies expelled from their settlements by your arms ; the cities of our allies forced and plundered ; the Roman lands pillaged and laid waste ; Rome itself invested, terrified with the apprehension of famine, and of the whole variety of miseries incident to a city besieged : how is it, that all this has not been

sufficient to assuage thy thirst of vengeance? O Marcius, at thy first entering the Roman territory, did it not come in thy mind,—‘ this is the country that gave me birth ; here I was nourished in my infancy ; here I was brought up ? ’—And couldst thou have the heart to lay it waste ? When thou sawest the walls of Rome from afar, was it possible to forget, that within those walls were thy household gods, thy mother, thy wife, thy children ? yet none of these reflections had any power to move thee. The most amicable offers, repeated offers from the senate, by ambassadors, men of the highest worth, and chosen from among thy friends, have been rejected by thee with scorn. The intercession, the earnest entreaties of the whole body of the priesthood, those sacred ministers of religion, have had no power to move thy compassion. No ; to satisfy thy boundless revenge, Rome, thy native city, must be sacked, and its inhabitants reduced to slavery. A frenzy, a madness of anger transports thee ! Heaven is appeased by supplications, vows, and sacrifices : shall mortals be implacable ? Will Marcius set no bounds to his resentment ?—But allowing that thy enmity to thy country is too violent to let thee listen to her petition for peace ; yet be not deaf, my son, be not inexorable to the prayers and tears of thy mother. Thou darest the very appearance of ingratitude towards the Volsci ; and shall thy mother have reason to accuse thee of being ungrateful ? Call to mind the tender care I took of thy infancy and earliest youth ; the alarms, the anxiety, I suffered on thy account, when, entered into the state of manhood, thy life was almost daily exposed in foreign wars ; the apprehensions, the terrors, I underwent when I saw thee so warmly en-

gaged in our domestic quarrels, and, with heroic courage, opposing the unjust pretensions of the furious plebeians. My sad forebodings of the event have been but too well verified. Consider the wretched life I have endured, if it may be called life, the time that has passed since I was deprived of thee. O Marcius, refuse me not the only request I ever made to thee ; I will never importune thee with any other. Cease thy immoderate anger ; be reconciled to thy country ; this is all I ask : grant me but this and we shall both be happy. Freed from those tempestuous passions which now agitate thy soul, and from all the torments of self-reproach, thy days will flow smoothly on in the sweet serenity of conscious virtue ; and as for me, if I carry back to Rome the hopes of an approaching peace, an assurance of thy being reconciled to thy country, with what transports of joy shall I be received ! In what honour, in what delightful repose, shall I pass the remainder of my life ! What immortal glory shall I have acquired ! And, if it be true, that there are different places for our souls, after death, I shall be in no danger of descending to those subterraneous and gloomy caverns where the wicked are confined. Nay, the Elysian fields, that delightful abode allotted for the virtuous, will not be the place of my habitation, but the pure and sublime region of the air, which is said to be inhabited by the most exalted spirits. My soul shall there publish the praises of thy piety and affection to me, and never cease importuning Heaven to grant thee a full recompense of all thy merit.”

Coriolanus made no attempt to interrupt Veturia while she was speaking ; and when she had ceased, he still continued in deep silence. Anger, hatred, and

desire of revenge, balanced in his heart those softer passions which the sight and discourse of his mother had awakened in his breast. She perceiving his irresolution, and fearing the event, thus renewed her expostulation :

“ Why dost thou not answer me, my son ? Is there then such greatness of mind in giving all to resentment ? Art thou ashamed to grant any thing to a mother who thus intreats thee, thus humbles herself to thee ? If it be so, to what purpose should I longer endure a wretched life ?” As she uttered these last words, interrupted by sighs, she threw herself prostrate at his feet. His wife and children did the same ; and all the other women, with united voices of mournful accent, begged and implored his pity.

The Volscian officers, not able unmoved to behold this scene, turned away their eyes : but Coriolanus, almost beside himself to see Veturia at his feet, passionately cried out : “ Ah ! mother, what art thou doing ?” And, tenderly pressing her hand, in raising her up, he added, in a low voice, “ Rome is saved, but thy son is lost.”

Early the next morning, Coriolanus broke up his camp, and peaceably marched his army homewards. Nobody had the boldness to contradict his orders. Many were exceedingly dissatisfied with his conduct ; but others excused it, being more affected with his filial respect to his mother, than with their own interests.

HOOKE'S ROMAN HISTORY.

CHAPTER VI.

D I A L O G U E S.

SECTION I.

*Theron & Aspasio.**Beauty and utility combined in the productions of nature.*

THERON and ASPASIO took a morning walk into the fields ; their spirits cheered, and their imaginations lively ; gratitude glowing in their hearts, and the whole creation smiling around them.

After sufficient exercise, they seated themselves on a mossy-hillock, which offered its couch. The rising sun had visited the spot, to dry up the dews and exhale the damps, that might endanger health ; to open the violets, and to expand the primroses, that decked the green. The whole shade of the wood was collected behind them ; and a beautiful, extensive, diversified landscape spread itself before them.

Theron, according to his usual manner, made many improving remarks on the prospect, and its furniture. He traced the footsteps of an All-comprehending contrivance, and pointed out the strokes of inimitable skill. He observed the grand exertions of power, and the rich exuberance of goodness, most signally, most charmingly conspicuous through the whole.—Upon one circumstance he enlarged, with particular satisfaction.

THERON.

See ! Aspasio, how all is calculated to administer the highest delight to mankind. Those trees and hedges, which skirt the extremities of the landscape, stealing away from their real bulk, and lessening by gentle diminutions, appear like elegant pictures in miniature. Those which occupy the nearer situations, are a set of noble images, swelling upon the eye, in full proportion, and in a variety of graceful attitudes ; both of them ornamenting the several apartments of our common abode, with a mixture of delicacy and grandeur.

The blossoms that array the branches, the flowers that embroider the mead, address and entertain our eyes with every charm of beauty : whereas, to other creatures, they are destitute of all those attractions, which result from a combination of the loveliest colours, and the most alluring forms. Yonder streams, that glide, with smooth serenity, along the valleys, glittering to the distant view, like sheets of polished crystal, or soothing the attentive ear, with the softness of aquatic murmurs, are not less exhilarating to the fancy, than refreshing to the soul through which they pass. The huge, enormous mountain ; the steep and dizzy precipice ; the pendent horrors of the craggy promontory ; wild and awful as they are, furnish an agreeable entertainment to the human mind ; and please, even while they amaze : whereas, the beasts take no other notice of those majestic deformities, than to avoid the dangers they threaten.

ASPASIO.

How wonderfully do such considerations exalt our idea of the Creator's goodness, his very distinguishing

goodness to mankind ! and should they not proportionably endear that eternal Benefactor to our hearts ? His ever-bountiful hand has, with profuse liberality, scattered blessings among all the ranks of animated existence. But to us he exercises a beneficence of a very superior kind. We are treated with peculiar attention. We are admitted to scenes of delight, which none but ourselves are capable of relishing.

THERON.

Another remark, though very obvious, is equally important. The destination of all these external things is no less advantageous, than their formation is beautiful. The bloom, which engages the eye with its delicate hues, is cherishing the embryo fruit ; and forming, within its silken folds, the rudiments of a future desert.—those streams, which shine from afar, like fluid silver, are much more valuable in their productions, and beneficial in their services, than they are beautiful in their appearance. They distribute, as they roll along their winding banks, cleanliness to our houses, and fruitfulness to our lands. They nourish, and at their own expense, a never-failing supply of the finest fish. They visit our cities, and attend our wharfs, as so many public vehicles, ready to set out at all hours.

Those sheep, which gave their udders to be drained by the busy frisking lambs, are fattening their flesh for our support ; and while they fill their own fleeces, are providing for our comfortable clothing. Yonder kine, some of which are browsing upon the tender herb, others, satiated with pasturage, and ruminating under the shady covert, though conscious of no such design,

are concocting, for our use, one of the softest, purest, most salutary of liquors, The bees that fly humming about our seat, and pursue their work on the fragrant blossoms, are collecting balm and sweetness, to compose the richest of sirups ; which, though the produce of their toil, is intended for our good. Nature and her whole family, are our obsequious servants, our ever-active labourers. They bring the fruits of their united industry, and pour them into our lap, or deposit them in our store-rooms.

ASPASIO.

Who can ever sufficiently admire this immense benignity!—The Supreme Disposer of events has commanded delight and profit to walk hand in hand, through his ample creation ; making all things so perfectly pleasing, as if beauty was their only end ; yet all things so eminently serviceable, as if usefulness had been their sole design.—And, as a most winning invitation to our gratitude, he has rendered man the centre, in which all the emanations of his beneficence, diffused through this terrestrial system, finally terminate,

HERVEY.

SECTION II.

CADMUS AND HERCULES.

Importance of Literature.

HERCULES.

Do you pretend to sit as high on Olympus as Hercules? Did you kill the Nemean lion, the Erymanthian boar, the Lernean serpent, and Stymphalian birds?

Did you destroy tyrants and robbers? You value yourself greatly on subduing one serpent: I did as much as that while I lay in my cradle.

CADMUS.

It is not on account of the serpent that I boast myself a greater benefactor to Greece than you. Actions should be valued by their utility, rather than their splendour. I taught Greece the art of writing, to which laws owe their precision and permanency. You subdued monsters; I civilized men. It is from untamed passions, not from wild beasts, that the greatest evils arise to human society. By wisdom, by art, by the united strength of civil community, men have been enabled to subdue the whole race of lions, bears, and serpents: and, what is more, to bind by laws and wholesome regulations, the ferocious violence and dangerous treachery of the human disposition. Had lions been destroyed only in single combat, men had had but a bad time of it; and what but laws could awe the men who killed the lions? The genuine glory, the proper distinction of the rational species, arise from the perfection of the mental powers. Courage is apt to be fierce, and strength is often exerted in acts of oppression; but wisdom is the associate of justice. It assists her to form equal laws, to pursue right measures, to correct power, protect weakness, and to unite individuals in a common interest and general welfare. Heroes may kill tyrants; but it is wisdom and laws that prevent tyranny and oppression. The operations of policy far surpass the labours of Hercules, preventing many evils which value and might cannot even redress. You Heroes regard nothing but glory; and scarcely consider whether the

conquests which raise your fame, are really beneficial to your country. Unhappy are the people who are governed by valour, not directed by prudence, and not mitigated by the gentle arts !

HERCULES.

I do not expect to find an admirer of my strenuous life, in the man who taught his countrymen to sit still and read ; and to lose the hours of youth and action in idle speculation and the sport of words.

CADMUS.

An ambition to have a place in the registers of fame, is the Eurystheus which imposes heroic labours on mankind. The muses incite to action, as well as entertain the hours of repose ; and I think you should honour them for presenting to heroes such a noble recreation, as may prevent their taking up the distaff, when they lay down the club.

HERCULES.

Wits as well as heroes can take up the distaff. What think you of their thin-spun systems of philosophy, or lascivious poems, or Milesian fables ? Nay, what is still worse, are there not panegyrics on tyrants, and books that blaspheme the gods, and perplex the natural sense of right and wrong ? I believe if Eurystheus were to set me to work again, he would find me a worse task than any he imposed ; he would make me read over a great library ; and I would serve it as I did the Hydra, I would burn as I went on, that one chimera might not rise from another, to plague mankind. I should have valued myself more on clearing the library, than on cleansing the Augean stables.

CADMUS.

It is in those libraries only that the memory of your labours exists. The heroes of Marathon, the patriots of Thermopyæ owe their fame to me. All the wise institutions of lawgivers, and all the doctrines of sages, had perished in the ear, like a dream related, if letters had not preserved them. O Hercules! it is not for the man who preferred virtue to pleasure, to be an enemy to the muses. Let Sardanapalus and the filken sons of luxury, who have wasted life in inglorious ease, despise the records of action, which bear no honourable testimony to their lives: but true merit, heroic virtue, should respect the sacred source of lasting honour.

HERCULES.

Indeed, if writers employed themselves only in recording the acts of great men, much might be said in their favour. But why do they trouble people with their meditations? Can it be of any consequence to the world what an idle man has been thinking?

CADMUS.

Yes it may. The most important and extensive advantages mankind enjoy, are greatly owing to men who have never quitted their closets. To them mankind are obliged for the facility and security of navigation. The invention of the compass has opened to them new worlds. The knowledge of the mechanical powers has enabled them to construct such wonderful machines, as perform what the united labour of millions, by the severest drudgery, could not accomplish. Agriculture too, the most useful of arts, has received its share of improvement from the same source. Poetry

likewise is of excellent use, to enable the memory to retain with more ease, and to imprint with more energy upon the heart, precepts and examples of virtue. From the little root of a few letters, science has spread its branches over all nature, and raised its head to the heavens. Some philosophers have entered so far into the counsels of Divine Wisdom, as to explain much of the great operations of nature. The dimensions and distances of the planets, the causes of their revolutions, the path of comets, and the ebbing and flowing of tides, are understood and explained. Can any thing raise the glory of the human species more, than to see a little creature, inhabiting a small spot, amidst innumerable worlds, taking a survey of the universe, comprehending its arrangement, and entering into the scheme of that wonderful connexion and correspondence of things so remote, and which it seems a great exertion of Omnipotence to have established? What a volume of wisdom, what a noble theology do these discoveries open to us! While some superior geniuses have soared to these sublime subjects, other sagacious and diligent minds have been inquiring into the most minute works of the Infinite Artificer: the same care, the same providence is exerted through the whole; and we should learn from it, that, to true wisdom, utility and fitness appear perfection, and whatever is beneficial is noble.

HERCULES.

I approve of science as far as it is assistant to action. I like the improvement of navigation, and the discovery of the greater part of the globe, because it opens a wider field for the master spirits of the world to bustle in.

CADMUS.

There spoke the soul of Hercules. But if learned men are to be esteemed for the assistance they give to active minds in their schemes, they are not less to be valued for their endeavours to give them a right direction, and moderate their too great ardour. The study of history will teach the legislator by what means states have become powerful; and in the private citizen, they will inculcate the love of liberty and order. The writings of sages point out a private path of virtue; and show that the best empire is self-government, and that subduing our passions is the noblest of conquests.

HERCULES.

The true spirit of heroism acts by a generous impulse, and wants neither the experience of history, nor the doctrines of philosophers to direct it. But do not arts and sciences render men effeminate, luxurious, and inactive? and can you deny that wit and learning are often made subservient to very bad purposes?

CADMUS.

I will own that there are some natures so happily formed, they scarcely want the assistance of a master, and the rules of art, to give them force or grace in every thing they do. But these favoured geniuses are few. As learning flourishes only where ease, plenty, and mild government subsist; in so rich a soil, and under so soft a climate, the weeds of luxury will spring up among the flowers of art: but the spontaneous weeds would grow more rank, if they were allowed the undisturbed possession of the field. Letters keep a frugal temperate nation from growing ferocious, a rich one

from becoming entirely sensual and debauched. Every gift of Heaven is sometimes abused; but good sense and fine talents, by a natural law, gravitate towards virtue. Accidents may drive them out of their proper direction; but such accidents are an alarming omen, and of dire portent to the times. For if virtue cannot keep to her allegiance those men, who in their hearts confess her divine right, and know the value of her laws, on whose fidelity and obedience can she depend? May such geniuses never descend to flatter vice, encourage folly, or propagate irreligion; but exert all their powers in the service of virtue, and celebrate the noble choice of those, who, like Hercules, preferred her to pleasure!

LORD LYTTTELTON.

SECTION III.

PLINY the Elder and PLINY the Younger.

Nothing is great that is unnatural and affected.

PLINY THE ELDER.

THE account that you give me, nephew, of your behaviour, amidst the terrors and perils that accompanied the first eruption of Vesuvius, does not please me much. There was more of vanity in it than of true magnanimity. Nothing is great that is unnatural and affected. When the earth was shaking beneath you, when the whole heaven was darkened with sulphurous clouds; when all nature seemed falling into its final destruction, to be reading Livy, and making extracts, was an absurd affectation. To meet danger with courage, is manly; but to be insensible of it, is brutal stupidity; and to pretend insensibility, where it

cannot be supposed, is ridiculous falseness. When you afterwards refused to leave your aged mother, and save yourself without her, you indeed acted nobly. It was also becoming a Roman to keep up her spirits, amidst all the horrors of that tremendous scene, by showing yourself undismayed. But the real merit and glory of this part of your behaviour is sunk by the other, which gives an air of ostentation and vanity to the whole.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

That vulgar minds should consider my attention to my studies, in such a conjuncture, as unnatural and affected, I should not much wonder. But that you would blame it as such, I did not apprehend; you, whom no business could separate from the muses; you who approached nearer to the fiery storm, and fell by the suffocating heat of the vapour.

PLINY THE ELDER.

This happened in doing my duty. Let me recall to your remembrance all the particulars, and then you shall judge yourself on the difference of your behaviour and mine. I was the prefect of the Roman fleet, which then lay at Misenum. On the first account I received of the very unusual cloud that appeared in the air, I ordered a vessel to carry me out, to some distance from the shore, that I might the better observe the phenomenon, and endeavour to discover its nature and cause. This I did, as a philosopher, and it was a curiosity proper and natural to an inquisitive mind. I offered to take you with me, and surely you should have gone; for Livy might have been read at any other time, and such spectacles are not frequent. When I came out from my house, I found all the inha-

bitants of Misenum flying to the sea. That I might assist them, and all others who dwelt on the coast, I immediately commanded the whole fleet to put out ; and I sailed with it all round the bay of Naples, steering particularly to those parts of the shore where the danger was greatest, and from whence the affrighted people were endeavouring to escape with the most trepidation. Thus I happily preserved some thousands of lives ; noting at the same time, with an unshaken composure and freedom of mind, the several phenomena of the eruption. Towards night, as we approached to the foot of Mount Vesuvius, our gallies were covered with ashes, the showers of which grew continually hotter and hotter : then pumice stones, and burnt and broken pyrites began to fall on our heads ; and we were stopt by the obstacles which the ruins of the volcano had suddenly formed, by falling into the sea, and almost filling it up, on that part of the coast. I then commanded my pilot to steer to the villa of my friend Pomponianus, which, you know, was situated in the inmost recess of the bay. The wind was very favourable to carry me thither, but would not allow him to put off from the shore, as he was desirous to do. We were therefore constrained to pass the night in his house. The family watched, and I slept ; till the heaps of pumice stones, which incessantly fell from the clouds, that had by this time been impelled to that side of the bay, rose so high in the area of the apartment I lay in, that, if I had staid any longer, I could not have got out ; and the earthquakes were so violent, as to threaten every moment the fall of the house. We, therefore, thought it more safe to go into the open air, guarding our heads, as well as we were able, with pillows tied

upon them. The wind continuing contrary, and the sea very rough, we all remained on the shore, till the descent of a sulphurous and fiery vapour suddenly oppressed and overpowered me. In all this I hope that I acted as the duty of my station required, and with true magnanimity. But on this occasion, and in many other parts of your conduct, I must say, my dear nephew, there was a mixture of vanity blended with your virtue, which impaired and disgraced it. Without that, you would have been one of the worthiest men whom Rome has ever produced ; for none excelled you in sincere integrity of heart and greatness of sentiments. Why would you lose the substance of glory by seeking the shadow ?—Your eloquence had, I think, the same fault as your manners : it was generally too affected. You professed to make Cicero your guide and pattern ; but when one reads his panegyric upon Julius Cæsar, in his oration for Marcellus, and yours upon Trajan, the first seems the genuine language of truth and nature, raised and dignified with all the majesty of the most sublime oratory : the latter appears the harangue of a florid rhetorician, more desirous to shine, and to set off his own wit, than to extol the great man whose virtues he was praising.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

I will not question your judgment either of my life or my writings. They might both have been better, if I had not been too solicitous to render them perfect. It is perhaps some excuse for the affectation of my style, that it was the fashion of the age in which I wrote. But it is mortifying to me to say much on this subject. Permit me therefore to resume the contemplation of

that on which our conversation turned before. What a direful calamity was the eruption of Vesuvius, which you have been describing ! Do not you remember the beauty of that fine coast, and of the mountain itself, before it was torn with the violence of those internal fires, that forced their way through its surface ? The foot of it was covered with corn fields and rich meadows, interspersed with splendid villas, and magnificent towns : the sides of it were clothed with the best vines in Italy. How quick, how unexpected, how terrible was the change ! All was at once overwhelmed with ashes, cinders, broken rocks, and fiery torrents, presenting to the eye the most dismal scene of horror and desolation.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

You paint it very truly.—But has it never occurred to your philosophical mind, that this change is a striking emblem of that which must happen, by the natural course of things, to every rich, luxurious state ? While the inhabitants of it are sunk in voluptuousness, while all is smiling around them, and they imagine that no evil, no danger is nigh, the latent seeds of destruction are fermenting within ; till, breaking out on a sudden, they lay waste all their opulence, all their boasted delights ; and leave them a sad monument of the fatal effects of internal tempests and convulsions.

LORD LYTTTELTON.

SECTION IV.

Marcus Aurelius Philosophus and Servius Tullius.

An absolute and a limited monarchy compared.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

YES, Marcus, though I own you to have been the first of mankind in virtue and goodness ; though, while you governed, philosophy sat on the throne, and diffused the benign influences of her administration over the whole Roman Empire, yet as a king, I might, perhaps, pretend to a merit even superior to yours.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

That philosophy you ascribe to me has taught me to feel my own defects, and to venerate the virtues of other men. Tell me, therefore, in what consisted the superiority of your merit, as a king.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

It consisted in this, that I gave my people freedom. I diminished, I limited the kingly power, when it was placed in my hands. I need not tell you, that the plan of government instituted by me, was adopted by the Romans, when they had driven out Tarquin, the destroyer of their liberty ; and gave its form to that Republic, composed of a due mixture of the regal, aristocratical, and democratical powers, the strength and wisdom of which subdued the world.— Thus all the glory of that great people, who for many ages excelled the rest of mankind, in the arts of policy, belongs originally to me.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

There is much truth in what you say. But would not the Romans have done better, if, after the expulsion of Tarquin, they had vested the regal power in a limited monarch, instead of placing it in two annual elective magistrates, with the title of Consuls? This was a great deviation from your plan of government, and I think an unwise one. For a divided royalty is a solecism, and absurdity in politics. Nor was the regal power, committed to the administration of consuls, continued in their hands long enough, to enable them to finish any act of great moment. From hence arose a necessity of prolonging their commands beyond the legal term; of shortening the interval prescribed by the laws between the elections to those offices; and of granting extraordinary commissions and powers, by all which the republic was in the end destroyed.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

The revolution which ensued upon the death of Lucretia was made with so much anger, that it is no wonder the Romans abolished in their fury the name of king, and desired to weaken a power, the exercise of which had been so grievous; though the doing of this was attended with all the inconveniences you have justly observed. But if anger acted too violently in reforming abuses, philosophy might have wisely corrected that error. Marcus Aurelius might have new modelled the constitution of Rome, He might have made it a limited monarchy, leaving to the Emperors all the power that was necessary to govern a wide extended Empire, and to the senate and people all the liberty that could be consistent with order and obedience to government; a liberty purged of faction, and guarded against anarchy.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I should have been happy indeed, if it had been in my power to do such good to my country. But Heaven will not force its blessings on men, who by their vices are become incapable to receive them. Liberty, like power, is only good for those who possess it, when it is under the constant direction of virtue. No laws can have force enough to hinder it from degenerating into faction and anarchy, where the morals of a nation are depraved ; and continued habits of vice will eradicate the very love of it out of the hearts of a people. A Marcus Brutus, in my time, could not have drawn to his standard a single legion of Romans. But further, it is certain that the spirit of liberty is absolutely incompatible with the spirit of conquest. To keep great conquered nations in subjection and obedience, great standing armies are necessary. The generals of those armies will not long remain subjects ; and whoever acquires dominion by the sword, must rule by the sword. If he does not destroy liberty, liberty will destroy him.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Do you then justify Augustus for the change he made in the Roman government ?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I do not : for Augustus had no lawful authority to make that change. His power was usurpation and breach of trust. But the government, which he seized with a violent hand, came to me by a lawful and established rule of succession.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Can any length of establishment make despotism lawful? Is not liberty an inherent, inalienable right of mankind?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

They have an inherent right to be governed by laws, not by arbitrary will. But forms of government may, and must be occasionally changed, with the consent of the people. When I reigned over them the Romans were governed by laws.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Yes, because your moderation, and the precepts of that philosophy in which your youth had been tutored, inclined you to make the laws the rule of your government, and the bounds of your power. But, if you had desired to govern otherwise, had they power to restrain you?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

They had not: the Imperial authority in my time had no limitations.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Rome therefore was in reality as much enslaved under you, as under your son; and you left him the power of tyrannising over it by hereditary right.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I did;—and the conclusion of that tyranny was his murder.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Unhappy father ! unhappy king ! what a detestable thing is absolute monarchy, when even the virtues of Marcus Aurelius could not hinder it from being destructive to his family, and pernicious to his country, any longer than the period of his own life ! But how happy is that kingdom, in which a limited monarch presides over a state so justly poised, that it guards itself from such evils, and has no need to take refuge in arbitrary power against the dangers of anarchy ; which is almost as bad a resource, as it would be for a ship to run itself on a rock, in order to escape from the agitation of a tempest.

LORD LYTTELTON.

SECTION V.

*Theron and Aspasio.**On the excellence of the Holy Scriptures.*

THERON.

I FEAR my friend suspects me to be somewhat wavering, or defective, in veneration for the Scriptures.

ASPASIO.

No, Theron, I have a better opinion of your taste and discernment, than to harbour any such suspicion.

THERON.

The Scriptures are certainly an inexhaustible fund of materials, for the most delightful and ennobling discourse and meditation. When we consider the Author of those sacred books, that they came originally from heaven, were dictated by Divine Wisdom, have the same consummate excellence as the works of creation; it is really surprising, that we are not often searching by study, by meditation, or converse, into one or other of those important volumes.

ASPASIO.

I admire, I must confess, the very language and composition of the Bible. Would you see history in all her simplicity, and all her force; most beautifully easy, yet irresistibly striking?—See her, or rather feel her energy, touching the nicest movements of the soul, and triumphing over our passions, in the inimitable narrative of Joseph's life.—The representation of Esau's bitter distress; the conversation pieces of Jonathan and his gallant friend; the memorable journal of the disciples

going to Emmaus ; are finished models of the impassioned and affecting.—Here is nothing studied ; no flights of fancy ; no embellishments of oratory. If we sometimes choose a plaintive strain, such as softens the mind, and soothes an agreeable melancholy, are any of the classic writers superior, in the eloquence of mourning, to David's pathetic elegy on his beloved Jonathan ; to his most passionate and inconsolable moan over the lovely but unhappy Absalom ; or to that melodious woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every line of Jeremiah's Lamentations ?

Are we admirers of antiquity ?—Here we are led back, beyond the universal deluge, and far beyond the date of any other annals.—We are introduced to the earliest inhabitants of the earth. We take a view of mankind in their undisguised primitive plainness, when the days of their life were but little short of a thousand years. We are brought acquainted with the origin of nations ; with the creation of the world ; and with the birth of time itself.

Are we delighted with vast achievements ?—Where is any thing comparable to the miracles in Egypt, and the wonders in the field of Zoan ? to the memoirs of the Israelites, passing through the depths of the sea ; sojourning amidst the inhospitable deserts ; and conquering the kingdom of Canaan ?—Here we behold the fundamental laws of the universe, sometimes suspended, sometimes reversed ; and not only the current of Jordan, but the course of nature controlled.

If we want maxims of wisdom, or have a taste for the laconic style,—how copiously may our wants be supplied, and how delicately our taste gratified ! especially in the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and some of

the minor prophets.—Here are the most sage lessons of instruction, adapted to every circumstance of life ; formed upon the experience of all preceding ages ; and perfected by the unerring Spirit of inspiration. These are delivered with such remarkable conciseness, that one might venture to say, every word is a sentence ; at least, every sentence may be called an apophthegm, sparkling with brightness of thought, or weighty with solidity of sense. The whole, like a profusion of pearls, containing, in a very small compass, a value almost immense ; all heaped up (as an ingenious writer observes) with a confused magnificence, above the little niceties of order.

If we look for strength of reasoning, and warmth of exhortation, or the manly boldness of impartial reproof ; let us have recourse to the acts of the apostles, and to the epistles of Paul. These are a specimen, or rather these are the standard, of them all.

Another recommendation of the scriptures, is, that they afford the most awful and most amiable manifestations of the Deity. His glory shines, and his goodness smiles, in those Divine pages, with unparalleled lustre. Here we have a satisfactory explanation of our own state. The origin of evil is traced ; the cause of all our misery discovered ; and the remedy, the infallible remedy, both clearly shown, and freely offered. The atonement and intercession of Christ lay a firm foundation for all our hopes ; while gratitude for his dying love suggests the most winning incitements to every duty. Morality, Theron, your (and, let me add, my) admired morality, is here delineated in all its branches, is placed upon its proper basis, and raised to its highest elevation. The Holy Spirit is promised to enlighten

the darkness of our understandings, and strengthen the imbecility of our wills. What an ample——Can you indulge me, on this favourite topic?

THERON.

It is, I assure you, equally pleasing to myself. Your enlargements, therefore, need no apology.

ASPASIO.

What ample provision is made, or referred to, by these excellent books, for all our spiritual wants! and, in this respect, how indisputable is their superiority to all other compositions? Is any one convinced of guilt, as provoking Heaven, and ruining the soul? Let him ask reason to point out a means of reconciliation, and a refuge of safety. Reason hesitates, as she replies; “The deity may, perhaps, accept our supplications, and grant forgiveness.” But the Scriptures leave us not to the sad uncertainty of conjecture. They speak the language of clear assurance. God has set forth a propitiation: he does forgive our iniquities: he will remember our sins no more.

Are we assaulted by temptation, or averse to duty? Philosophy may attempt to parry the thrust, or to stir up the reluctant mind, by disclosing the deformity of vice, and urging the fitness of things. Feeble expedients! just as well calculated to accomplish the ends proposed, as the flimsy fortification of a cobweb to defend us from the ball of a cannon. The Bible recommends no such incompetent succours. “My grace,” says its almighty Author, “is sufficient for thee.”—“Sin shall not have dominion over you.”—The great Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength, “worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure.”

Should we be visited with sickness, or overtaken by any calamity, the consolation which Plato offers, is, that such dispensations coincide with the universal plan of Divine government. Virgil will tell us, for our relief, that afflictive visitations are, more or less, the unavoidable lot of all men. Another moralist whispers in the dejected sufferer's ear, "Impatience adds to the load ; whereas a calm submission renders it more supportable."—Does the word of revelation dispense such spiritless and fugitive cordials?—No: those sacred pages inform us, that tribulations are fatherly chastisements, tokens of our Maker's love, and fruits of his care ; that they are intended to work in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness ; and to work out for us an eternal weight of glory.

Should we, under the summons of death, have recourse to the most celebrated comforters in the heathen world ; they would increase our apprehensions, rather than mitigate our dread. Death is represented, by the great master of their schools, as the most formidable of all evils. They were not able to determine, whether the soul survived the body. Whereas, this inspired volume strips the monster of his horrors, or turns him into a messenger of peace ; gives him an angel's face, and a deliverer's hand ; and ascertains to the souls of the righteous, an immediate translation into the regions of bliss.

THERON.

Another very distinguishing peculiarity of the sacred writings just occurs to my mind ; the method of communicating advice, or administering reproof, by parables : a method which levels itself to the lowest appre-

hension, without giving offence to most supercilious temper. Our Lord was asked by a student of the Jewish law, "Who is my neighbour?" which implied another question, "How is he to be loved?" The inquirer was conceited of himself, yet ignorant of the truth, and deficient in his duty. Had the wise instructor of mankind abruptly declared. "Thou neither knowest the former, nor fulfillest the latter;" probably the querist would have reddened with indignation, and departed in a rage. To teach, therefore, and not disgust, to convince the man of his error, and not exasperate his mind, he frames a reply, as amiable in the manner as it was well adapted to the purpose.

A certain person going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves. Not content to rob him of his treasure, they strip him of his garments; wound him with great barbarity; and leave him half dead.—Soon after this calamitous accident, a traveller happens to come along that very road: and what renders him more likely to afford relief, he is one of the ministers of religion; one who taught others the lovely lessons of humanity and charity: and who was, therefore, under the strongest obligations to exemplify them in his own practice. He just glances an eye upon the deplorable object; sees him stretched on the cold ground, and weltering in his blood; but takes no farther notice: nay to avoid the trouble of an inquiry, he passes by on the other side. Scarcely was he departed, when a Levite approaches. This man comes nearer, and looks on the miserable spectacle; takes a leisurely and attentive survey of the case; and though every gash in the bleeding flesh cried and pleaded for compassion, this minister of the sanctuary neither speaks a word to

comfort, nor moves a hand to help. Last of all comes a Samaritan ; one of the abhorred nation, whom the Jews hated with the most implacable malignity. Though the Levite had neglected an expiring brother ; though the priest had withheld his pity from one of the Lord's peculiar people ; the very moment this Samaritan sees the unhappy sufferer, he melts into commiseration. He forgets the embittered foe, and considers only the distressed fellow creature. He springs from his horse, and resolves to intermit his journey. The oil and wine, intended for his own refreshment, he freely converts into healing unguents. He binds up the wounds ; sets the disabled stranger upon his own beast ; and with all the assiduity of a servant, with all the tenderneſs of a brother, conducts him to an inn. There he deposits money for his present use ; charges the host to omit nothing that might conduce to the recovery or comfort of his guest ; and promises to defray the whole expenſe of his lodging, his maintenance, and his cure.

What a lively picture of the most diſinterested and active benevolence ! a benevolence which excludes no persons, not even ſtrangers or enemies, from its tender regards ; which diſdains no condeſcenſion, grudges no cost, in its labours of love ! Could any method of conviction have been more forcible, and at the ſame time more pleaſing, than the interrogatory propoſed by our Lord, and deduced from the narrative ? “ Which now of theſe three, thinkeſt thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves ? ” Or can there be an advice more ſuitable to the occaſion, more important in its nature, or expreſſed with a more ſententious

energy, than that which is contained in these words ; “ Go thou, and do likewise ?” In this case, the learner instructs, the delinquent condemns, himself. Bigotry bears away its prejudice ; and pride, (when the moral so sweetly, so imperceptibly insinuates) even pride itself, lends a willing ear to admonition.

ASPASIO.

It has been very justly remarked, that this eloquence of similitudes is equally affecting to the wise, and intelligible to the ignorant. It shows, rather than relates, the point to be illustrated. It has been admired by the best judges in all ages ; but never was carried to its highest perfection, till our Lord spoke the parable of the prodigal ; which has a beauty that no paraphrase can heighten ; a perspicuity that renders all interpretation needless ; and a force which every reader, not totally insensible, must feel.

THERON.

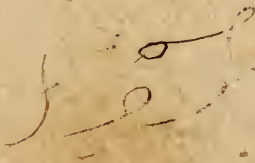
The condescension and goodness of God are every where conspicuous. In the productions of nature, he conveys to us the most valuable fruits, by the intervention of the loveliest blossoms. Though the present is in itself extremely acceptable, he has given it an additional endearment, by the beauties which array it, or the perfumes which surround it. In the pages of revelation, likewise, he has communicated to us the most glorious truths, adorned with the excellences of composition. They are, as one of their writers very elegantly speaks, “ like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

ASPASIO.

Who then would not willingly obey that benign command, “Thou shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up?”

When I consider the language of the Scriptures, and sometimes experience the holy energy which accompanies them, I am inclined to say; “other writings, though polished with the nicest touches of art, only tinkle on the ear, or affect us like the shepherd’s reed. But these, even amidst all their noble ease, strike, alarm, transport us.” When I consider the contents of the Scriptures, and believe myself interested in the promises they make, and the privileges they confer, I am induced to cry out, “What are all the other books in the world, compared with these invaluable volumes!”

HERVEY.



CHAPTER VII.

PUBLIC SPEECHES.

SECTION I.

The defence of Socrates before his Judges.

SOCRATES, in his defence, employed neither artifice nor the glitter of eloquence. He had not recourse either to sollicitation or entreaty. He brought neither his wife nor children to incline the judges in his favour, by their sighs and tears. But though he firmly refused to make use of any other voice than his own, and to appear before his judges in the submissive posture of a suppliant, he did not behave in that manner out of pride, or contempt of the tribunal: it was from a noble and intrepid assurance, resulting from greatness of soul, and the consciousness of his truth and innocence. His defence had nothing timorous or weak in it. His discourse was bold, manly, generous, without passion, without emotion, full of the noble liberty of a philosopher, with no other ornament than that of truth, and brightened universally with the character and language of innocence. Plato, who was present, transcribed it afterwards, and without any additions, composed from it the work which he calls the *Apology of Socrates*, one of the most consummate master-pieces of antiquity. The following is an extract from it.

“ I am accused, of corrupting the youth, and of instilling dangerous maxims into their minds, as well in

regard to Divine worship, as to the rules of government. You know, Athenians, that I never made it my profession to teach: nor can envy, however violent, reproach me with having ever sold my instructions. I have an undeniable evidence for me in this respect, which is my poverty. I am always equally ready to communicate my thoughts both to the rich and the poor, and to give them opportunity to question or answer me. I lend myself to every one who is desirous of becoming virtuous; and if, amongst those who hear me, there are any that prove either good or bad, neither the virtues of the one, nor the vices of the other, to which I have not contributed, are to be ascribed to me. My whole employment is to counsel the young and the old against too much love for the body, for riches, and all other precarious things, of whatever nature they be; and against too little regard for the soul, which ought to be the object of their affection. For I incessantly urge to you, that virtue does not proceed from riches; but, on the contrary, riches from virtue; and that all the other goods of human life, as well public as private, have their source in the same principle.

“If to speak in this manner be to corrupt youth, I confess, Athenians, that I am guilty, and deserve to be punished. If what I say be not true, it is most easy to convict me of falsehood. I see here a great number of my disciples: they have only to come forward. It will perhaps be said, that the regard and veneration due to a master who has instructed them, will prevent them from declaring against me: but their fathers, brothers, and uncles, cannot, as good relations and good citizens, excuse themselves for not standing forth to demand vengeance against the corrupter of their sons, brothers,

and nephews. These are, however, the persons who take upon them my defence, and interest themselves in the success of my cause.

“Pass on me what sentence you please, Athenians ; I can neither repent nor alter my conduct. I must not abandon or suspend a function which God himself has imposed on me. Now he has charged me with the care of instructing my fellow-citizens. If after having faithfully kept all the posts wherein I was placed by our generals at Potidæa, Amphipolis, and Delium, the fear of death should at this time make me abandon that in which the divine Providence has placed me, by commanding me to pass my life in the study of philosophy for the instruction of myself and others ; this would be a most criminal desertion indeed, and make me highly worthy of being cited before this tribunal, as an impious man who does not believe in the gods. Should you resolve to acquit me, I should not, Athenians, hesitate to say, I honour and love you ; but I shall choose rather to obey God than you ; and to my latest breath shall never renounce my philosophy, nor cease to exhort and reprove you according to my custom, by saying to each of you occasionally ; “My good friend and citizen of the most famous city in the world for wisdom and valour, are you not ashamed to have no other thoughts than those of amassing wealth and of acquiring glory, credit, and dignities ; neglecting the treasures of prudence, truth, and wisdom, and taking no pains to render your soul as good and perfect as it is capable of being ?”

“I am reproached with abject fear, and meanness of spirit, for being so busy in imparting my advice to every one in private, and for having always avoided to be

present in your assemblies to give my counsels to my country. I think I have sufficiently proved my courage and fortitude, both in the field, where I have borne arms with you, and in the senate, where I alone opposed the unjust sentence you pronounced against the ten captains, who had not taken up and interred the bodies of those who were killed and drowned in the sea-fight near the island Arginusæ; and when, upon more than one occasion, I opposed the violent and cruel orders of the thirty tyrants. What is it then that has prevented me from appearing in your assemblies? It is that voice divine, which you have so often heard me mention, and Melitus has taken so much pains to ridicule. That spirit has attached itself to me from my infancy. It is a voice which I never hear but when it would prevent me from persisting in something I have resolved; for it never exhorts me to undertake any thing. It is the same being that has always opposed me when I would have intermeddled in the affairs of the republic, and that with the greatest reason: for I should have been amongst the dead long ago, had I been concerned in the measures of the state, without effecting any thing to the advantage of myself or our country. Do not take it ill, I beseech you, if I speak my thoughts without disguise, and with truth and freedom. Every man who would generously oppose a whole people, either amongst us or elsewhere, and who inflexibly applies himself to prevent the violation of the laws, and the practice of iniquity in a government, will never do so long with impunity. It is absolutely necessary for a man of this disposition, if he has any thoughts of living, to remain in a private station, and never to have any share in the public affairs.

“ For the rest, Athenians, if, in my present extreme danger, I do not imitate the behaviour of those, who, upon less emergencies, have implored and supplicated their judges with tears, and have brought forth their children, relations, and friends ; it is not through pride and obstinacy, or any contempt for you, but solely for your honour, and for that of the whole city. You should know, that there are amongst our citizens those who do not regard death as an evil, and who give that name only to injustice and infamy. At my age, and with the reputation, true or false, which I have, would it be consistent for me, after all the lessons I have given upon the contempt of death, to be afraid of it myself, and to belie, in my last action, all the principles and sentiments of my past life ?

“ But without speaking of my fame, which I should extremely injure by such a conduct, I do not think it allowable to entreat a judge, nor to be absolved by supplications. He ought to be persuaded and convinced. The judge does not sit upon the bench to show favour, by violating the laws, but to do justice in conforming to them. He does not swear to discharge with impunity whom he pleases, but to do justice where it is due. We ought not, therefore, to accustom you to perjury, nor you to suffer yourselves to be accustomed to it ; for, in so doing, both the one and the other of us equally injure justice and religion, and both are criminals.

“ Do not, therefore expect from me, Athenians, that I should have recourse amongst you to means which I believe neither honest nor lawful, especially upon this occasion, wherein I am accused of impiety by Melitus : for, if I should influence you by my prayers, and thereby induce you to violate your oaths, it would be unde-

niably evident, that I teach you not to believe in the gods; and even in defending and justifying myself, should furnish my adversaries with arms against me, and prove that I believe no divinity. But I am very far from such bad thoughts: I am more convinced of the existence of God, than my accusers are; and so convinced, that I abandon myself to God and you, that you may judge of me as you shall deem best for yourselves and me."

Socrates pronounced this discourse with a firm and intrepid tone. His air, his action, his visage, expressed nothing of the accused. He seemed to be the master of his judges, from the greatness of soul with which he spoke, without however losing any of the modesty natural to him. But how slight soever the proofs were against him, the faction was powerful enough to find him guilty. There was the form of a process against him, and his irreligion was the pretence upon which it was grounded; but his death was certainly a concerted thing. His steady and uninterrupted course of obstinate virtue, which had made him in many cases appear singular, and oppose whatever he thought illegal or unjust, without any regard to times or persons, had procured him a great deal of envy and ill will. After his sentence, he continued with the same serene and intrepid aspect with which he had long enforced virtue, and held tyrants in awe. When he entered his prison, which then became the residence of virtue and probity, his friends followed him thither, and continued to visit him during the interval between his condemnation and his death.

SECTION II.

The Scythian ambassadours to Alexander, on his making preparations to attack their country.

IF your person were as gigantic as your desires, the world could not contain you. Your right hand would touch the east, and your left the west at the same time : you grasp at more than you are equal to. From Europe you reach Asia ; from Asia you lay hold on Europe. And if you should conquer all mankind, you seem disposed to wage war with woods and snows, with rivers and wild beasts, and to attempt to subdue nature. But have you considered the usual course of things ? have you reflected, that great trees are many years in growing to their height, and are cut down in an hour ? It is foolish to think of the fruit only, without considering the height you have to climb to come at it. Take care lest, while you strive to reach the top, you fall to the ground with the branches you have laid hold on.

Besides, what have you to do with the Scythians, or the Scythians with you ? We have never invaded Macedon ; why should you attack Scythia ? you pretend to be the punisher of robbers ; and are yourself the general robber of mankind. You have taken Lydia ; you have seized Syria ; you are master of Persia ; you have subdued the Bactrianes, and attacked India : all this will not satisfy you, unless you lay your greedy and insatiable hands upon our flocks and our herds. How imprudent is your conduct ! you grasp at riches, the possession of which only increases your avarice. You increase your hunger, by what should produce satiety ; so that the more you have, the more you desire. But have you forgotten how long the conquest of the

Bactrians detained you ? While you were subduing them the Sogdians revolted. Your victories serve to no other purpose than to find you employment, by producing new wars ; for the business of every conquest is twofold, to win, and to preserve. Though you may be the greatest of warriors, you must expect that the nations you conquer will endeavour to shake off the yoke as fast as possible : for what people choose to be under foreign dominion ?

If you will cross the Tanais, you may travel over Scythia, and observe how extensive a territory we inhabit : but to conquer us is quite another business.— You will find us at one time, too nimble for your pursuit ; and at another, when you think we are fled far enough from you, you will have us surprise you in your camp : for the Scythians attack with no less vigour than they fly. It will, therefore, be your wisdom to keep with strict attention what you have gained : catching at more you may lose what you have. We have a proverbial saying in Scythia, that Fortune has no feet, and is furnished only with hands to distribute her capricious favours, and with fins to elude the grasp of those to whom she has been bountiful.— You profess yourself to be a god, the son of Jupiter Ammon : it suits the character of a god to bestow favours on mortals, not to deprive them of what they have. But if you are no god, reflect on the precarious condition of humanity. You will thus show more wisdom, than by dwelling on those subjects which have puffed up your pride, and made you forget yourself.

You see how little you are likely to gain by attempting the conquest of Scythia. On the other hand, you may, if you please, have in us a valuable alliance.— We command the borders both of Europe and Asia.

There is nothing between us and Bactria but the river Tanais ; and our territory extends to Thrace, which, as we have heard, borders on Macedon. If you decline attacking us in a hostile manner, you may have our friendship. Nations which have never been at war are on an equal footing ; but it is in vain that confidence is reposed in a conquered people. There can be no sincere friendship between the oppressors and the oppressed : even in peace, the latter think themselves entitled to the rights of war against the former. We will, if you think 'good, enter into a treaty with you, according to our manner, which is not by signing, sealing, and taking the gods to witness, as is the Grecian custom ; but by doing actual services. The Scythians are not used to promise, but perform without promising. And they think an appeal to the gods superfluous ; for that those who have no regard for the esteem of men will not hesitate to offend the gods by perjury.—You may therefore consider with yourself, whether you would choose to have for allies or for enemies, a people of such a character, and so situated as to have it in their power either to serve you or to annoy you, according as you treat them.

Q. CURTIUS.

SECTION III.

Speech of CANULEIUS, a Roman tribune, to the consuls ; in which he demands that the Plebians may be admitted into the consulship, and that the law prohibiting patricians and plebeians from intermarrying may be repealed.

WHAT an insult upon us is this ! if we are not so rich as the patricians, are we not citizens of Rome as well as they ? inhabitants of the same country ? mem-

bers of the same community? The nations bordering upon Rome, and even strangers more remote, are admitted not only to marriages with us, but to what is of much greater importance, the freedom of the city. Are we, because we are commoners, to be worse treated than strangers?—And when we demand that the people may be free to bestow their offices and dignities on whom they please, do we ask any thing unreasonable or new? do we claim more than their original inherent right? what occasion then for all this uproar, as if the universe were falling to ruin!—They were just going to lay violent hands upon me in the Senate-house.

What! must this empire then be unavoidably overturned? Must Rome of necessity sink at once, if a plebeian, worthy of the office, should be raised to the consulship? The patricians, I am persuaded, if they could, would deprive you of the common light. It certainly offends them that you breathe, that you speak, that you have the shapes of men. Nay, but to make a commoner a consul, would be, say they, a most enormous thing. Numa Pompilius, however, without being so much as a Roman citizen, was made king of Rome: the elder Tarquin, by birth not even an Italian, was nevertheless placed upon the throne: Servius Tullius, the son of a captive woman (nobody knows who his father was) obtained the kingdom as the reward of his wisdom and virtue. In those days, no man, in whom virtue shone conspicuous, was rejected, or despised, on account of his race and descent. And did the state prosper less for that? were not these strangers the very best of all our kings? And supposing now that a plebeian should have their talents and merits, must he not be suffered to govern us?

But we find that, upon the abolition of the regal power, no commoner was chosen to the consulate." And what of that? Before Numa's time there were no pontiffs in Rome. Before Servius Tullius's days there was no Censur, no division of the people into classes and centuries. Who ever heard of consuls before the expulsion of Tarquin the Proud? Dictators, we all know, are of modern invention; and so are the offices of tribunes, ædiles, quæstors. Within these ten years we have made decemvirs, and we have unmade them. Is nothing to be done but what has been done before? That very law forbidding marriages of patricians with plebeians, is not that a new thing? was there any such law before the decemvirs enacted it? and a most shameful one it is in a free state. Such marriages, it seems, will taint the pure blood of the nobility! Why, if they think so, let them take care to match their sisters and daughters with men of their own sort.—There is no need to fear, that we shall force any body into a contract of marriage. But, to make an express law to prohibit marriages of patricians with plebeians, what is this but to show the utmost contempt of us, and to declare one part of the community to be impure and unclean.

They talk to us of the confusion there will be in families, if this statute should be repealed. I wonder they do not make a law against a commoner's living near a nobleman, or going the same road that he is going, or being present at the same feast, or appearing at the same market-place: they might as well pretend, that these things make confusion in families, as that intermarriages will do it. Does not every one know, that the child will be ranked according to the quality of his father, let him be a patrician or a plebeian? In

short, it is manifest enough, that we have nothing in view but to be treated as men and citizens ; nor can they who oppose our demand, have any motive to do it, but the love of domineering. I would fain know, consuls and patricians, whether the sovereign power is in the people of Rome, or in you ? I hope you will allow that the people can, at their pleasure, either make a law or repeal one. And will you then, as soon as any law is proposed to them, pretend to lift them immediately for the war, and hinder them from giving their suffrages, by leading them into the field ?

Hear me, consuls : whether the news of the war you talk of be true, or whether it be only a false rumour, spread abroad for nothing but a colour to send the people out of the city, I declare, as tribune, that this people, who have already so often maintained our country's cause, are again ready to defend and support it, if they may be restored to their natural rights, and you will no longer treat us like strangers in our own country. But if you account us unworthy of your alliance by intermarriages ; if you will not suffer the entrance to the chief offices in the state to be open to all persons of merit indifferently, but will confine your choice of magistrates to the senate alone—talk of wars as much as you please ; paint in your ordinary discourses, the league and power of our enemies in colours more formidable than you do now—I declare that this people, whom you so much despise, and to whom you are nevertheless indebted for all your victories, shall never more enlist themselves ; not a man of them shall take arms ; not a man of them shall expose his life for imperious lords, with whom he can neither share the dignities of the state, nor in private life have any alliance by marriage.

SECTION IV.

Speech of the Earl of Chatham, on the subject of employing Indians to fight against the Americans.

I CANNOT, my lords, I will not, join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace. This, my lords, is a perilous and tremendous moment : it is not a time for adulation ; the smoothness of flattery cannot save us in this rugged and awful crisis. It is now necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth. We must, if possible, dispel the delusion and darkness which envelop it ; and display, in its full danger and genuine colours, the ruin which is brought to our doors. Can ministers still presume to expect support in their infatuation ? Can parliament be so dead to its dignity and duty, as to give their support to measures thus obtruded and forced upon them ? measures, my lords, which have reduced this late flourishing empire to scorn and contempt ! But yesterday, and England might have stood against the world ; now, none so poor as to do her reverence ! The people, whom we at first despised as rebels, but whom we now acknowledge as enemies, are abetted against us, supplied with every military store, their interest consulted, and their ambassadors entertained by our inveterate enemy ;—and ministers do not, and dare not, interpose with dignity or effect. The desperate state of our army abroad is in part known. No man more highly esteems and honours the English troops than I do : I know their virtues and their valour. I know they can achieve any thing but impossibilities ; and I know that the conquest of English America is an impossibility. You cannot, my lords, you cannot conquer America. What is your present

situation there? We do not know the worst: but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing, and suffered much. You may swell every expense, accumulate every assistance, and extend your traffic to the shambles of every German despot; your attempts will be forever vain and impotent;--doubly so, indeed, from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your adversaries, to overrun them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty.

But, my lords, who is the man, that, in addition to the disgraces and mischiefs of the war, has dared to authorise and associate to our arms, the tomohawk and scalping knife of the savage?—to call into civilized alliance, the wild and inhuman inhabitants of the woods?—to delegate to the merciless indian, the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren? My lords, these enormities cry aloud for redress and punishment. But my lords, this barbarous measure has been defended, not only on the principles of policy and necessity, but also on those of morality; “for it is perfectly allowable,” says Lord Suffolk, “to use all the means which God and nature have put into our hands.” I am astonished, I am shocked, to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this house, or in this country. My lords, I did not intend to encroach so much on your attention; but I cannot repress my indignation--I feel myself impelled to speak. My lords, we are called upon as members of this house, as men, as Christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity!--“That God and nature have put into our hands!” What ideas of

God and nature, that noble lord may entertain, I know not : but I know, that such detestible principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What ! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping knife !—to the cannibal-savage, torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims ! Such notions shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that right reverend, and this most learned Bench, to vindicate the religion of their God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn,—upon the judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your lordships, to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble lord frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country. In vain did he defend the liberty, and establish the religion of Britian, against the tyranny of Rome, if these worse than Popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices are endured among us. To send forth the merciless cannibal, thirsting for blood ! against whom ?—your protestant brethren !—to lay waste their country, to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name, by the aid and instrumentality of these horrible savages !—Spain can no longer boast pre-eminence in barbarity. She armed herself with blood-

hounds to extirpate the wretched natives of Mexico : we, more ruthless, loose those brutal warriors against our countrymen in America, endeared to us by every tie that can sanctify humanity. I solemnly call upon your lordships, and upon every order of men in the state, to stamp upon this infamous procedure the indelible stigma of the public abhorrence. More particularly, I call upon the venerable prelates of our religion, to do away this iniquity ; let them perform a lustration to purify the country from this deep and deadly sin.

My lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more ; but my feelings and indignation were too strong to have allowed me to say less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor even reposed my head upon my pillow, without giving vent to my steadfast abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous principles.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROMISCUOUS AND MIXED PIECES.

SECTION I.

The Voyage of Life ; an allegory.

“**L**IFE,” says Seneca, “is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes. We first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better or more pleasing part of old age.” The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and, on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters. My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity ; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the ocean of life ; that we had already passed the straits of Infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence of those who undertook to

steer them ; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose, among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness : and, first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure ; but no sooner touched them, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands, all was darkness ; nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eyes could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools ; for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable : but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage ; since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with

much care or prudence ; for, by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him ; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten ; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence ; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed : nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course. If he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from weariness of their present condition ; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him : and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked, being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage, so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered

them as the solace of their labours ; yet in effect none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful ; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves ; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward ; but found some amusement of the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with hope, who was the constant associate of the Voyage of Life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last ; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions ; for in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety ; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of Life, was the gulph of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose ; and with shades, where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks, all who sailed on the ocean of Life must necessarily pass. Reason indeed was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet, by which they might escape ; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipu-

lating that she should approach so near the Rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before; but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach towards the gulph of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches, and stop the leaks, of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill; and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow: but I remarked, that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired;

nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of Life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly ; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the straits of Infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overfet by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees ; contended long with the encroaching waters ; and harassed themselves by labours that scarcely Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown power : “ Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquility, when thou and they are equally endangered ? ” I looked, and seeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

DR. JOHNSON.

SECTION II.

Striking instances of friendship, related in the Holy Scriptures.

ONE of the strongest and most affecting instances of a faithful attachment to be met with in history, occurs in the friendship which subsisted between two females. The instance alluded to, is recorded in the Jewish annals, and most pathetically related by one of the sacred penmen. The reader needs not be told, that this is the friendship of Naomi and Ruth.

Two very remarkable instances of friendship occur, in the history of our Saviour's life : it may not perhaps be altogether unnecessary to state them in all their striking circumstances.

The Evangelist, in relating the miracles which Christ performed at Bethany, by restoring a person to life who had lain some days in the grave, introduces his narrative by emphatically observing, that "Jesus loved Lazarus ;" intimating, it should seem, that the sentiments which Christ entertained of Lazarus, were a distinct and peculiar species of that general benevolence, with which he was actuated towards all mankind. Agreeably to this explication of the sacred historian's meaning, when the sisters of Lazarus sent to acquaint Jesus with the state in which their brother lay, they did not even mention his name ; but pointed him out by a more honourable and equally notorious designation. The terms of their message were, "Behold ! he whom thou lovest is sick !" Accordingly, when he informs his disciples of the notice he had thus received, his expression is, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." That Christ did not upon this occasion use the word friend in its loose undistinguishing acceptation, but in a restrained and strictly appropriated sense, is not only manifest from this plain account of the fact itself, but appears more evident from the sequel. For, as he was advancing to the grave, accompanied with the relations of the deceased, he discovered the same emotions of grief, as swelled the bosoms of those with whom Lazarus had been most intimately connected ; and sympathising with their common sorrow, he melted into tears. This circumstance was too remarkable to ef-

cape particular observation ; and it drew from the spectators, what one would think it must necessarily draw from every reader, this natural and obvious reflection, “ Behold ! how he loved him ! ”

But in the concluding catastrophe of our Saviour's life, he gave a still more decisive proof, that sentiments of the strongest personal attachment and friendship, were not unworthy of being admitted into his sacred bosom. They were too deeply, indeed, impressed, to be extinguished even by the most excruciating torments. In those dreadful moments, observing among the afflicted witnesses of his painful and ignominious sufferings, that faithful follower, who is described by the historian as “ the disciple whom he loved ; ” he distinguished him by the most convincing instance of superior confidence, esteem, and affection, that ever was exhibited to the admiration of mankind. For, under circumstances of the most agonizing torments, when it might be thought impossible for human nature to retain any other sensibility than that of its own inexpressible sufferings ; he recommended to the care and protection of this his tried and approved friend, in terms of peculiar regard and endearment, the most tender and sacred object of his private affections. But no language can represent this pathetic and affecting scene, with a force and energy equal to the sublime simplicity of the Evangelist's own narrative : “ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved, he saith to his mother, Behold thy son ! Then he saith to the disciple, Behold thy mother ! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.”

It may safely be asserted, that among all those memorable examples of friendship, which have been celebrated with the highest encomiums by the ancients ; there cannot be produced a single instance, in which the most distinguishing features of exalted amity are so strongly displayed, as in the foregoing relation. The only one, perhaps, that bears even a faint resemblance to it, is that famous transaction recorded by Lucian in his dialogue entitled *Toxaris*. Eudamidas being on his death-bed, made his will, by which he bequeathed his aged mother to the care and protection of Aretheus ; and his daughter to Charixenus, to be disposed of in marriage according to his discretion ; enjoining him, at the same time, to give her as ample a portion as his circumstances would admit. He added, that in case either of the legatees should happen to die, he substituted the survivor in his stead. Charixenus died very soon after the testator : in consequence of which, Aretheus took each of these singularly confidential legacies to himself ; and celebrating the marriage of his only daughter and that of his friend, on the same day, he divided his fortune equally between them.

When the very different circumstances attending these respective examples, are duly considered ; it must be acknowledged, that the former rises as much above the latter in the proof it exhibits of sublime friendship, as it does in the dignity of the characters concerned. Upon the whole then it appears, that the Divine Founder of the Christian religion, as well by his own example, as by the spirit of his moral doctrine, has not only encouraged, but consecrated friendship.

C. MELMOTH.

SECTION III.

MERCY.

And Abraham said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked, O Lord? GENESIS.

THIS verse, and those which follow, strikingly demonstrate, on the one hand, the mercy of the Almighty; and on the other, the benevolent disposition of this amiable patriarch. We are first struck with the tender arguments of Abraham, and then with the yielding kindness of the long-suffering Omnipotent. Wilt thou not spare the place, O Father, says the petitioner, for the sake of fifty upright characters? Far be it from charity and from benevolence, like thine, to do after this unequal manner: far be it from thee to blend the fates of the virtuous with those of the wicked: far be it from the universal Judge, who weigheth all things in the even balance, to do amiss, or to deal unfairly! The answers of the Deity are uncommonly affectionate, and consistent with the Divine Goodness. If I find, said he, fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. But alas! Abraham, who knew the wickedness of Sodom, as well as the mercy of the power whom he addressed, was obliged to go farther. Behold, now, I have taken upon me, poor imperfect creature as I am, a compound of dust and ashes, to speak before the Lord of nature; I tremble in thy presence, and yet I approach thee. Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: thou wilt not be extremely minute to mark what is wanting; nor can it be in thy benignant nature to destroy all the city for lack only of five.

To this the reply was agreeable to the wishes of the patriarch; for the Deity declared he would spare the city for the sake of forty and five. And thus the matter went on, requesting on the one hand, and granting on the other, till the Lord of forgiveness promised to suspend the stroke of destruction for the sake of ten. Perhaps the forbearance of Heaven to the children of men, was never more finely illustrated than in this instance: and when we consider it, we shall the less wonder at the little interruptions and stops that are put to the general impiety of the times. It is the grand complaint of moralists, that we live in an age far exceeding every other in point of degeneracy; that the world is much worse than it was in the days of old; and that, consequently, it is matter of astonishment the Creator doth not, for these reasons, destroy what he hath made, and hurry on, in wrath, the dissolution of all things. But the history of mankind evinces, that in the earliest periods, the vices and passions as generally prevailed as at present; that murder, envy, drunkenness, and every other error, as powerfully tyrannised over the human heart, as at this very hour: though, perhaps, the moderns may have made some innovations in iniquity, it is but doing the same bad things with more art, with more fashion, or with more refinement.

Infinite, indeed, must be the mercy, which, both at the beginning and now, preserves from the vengeance of Heaven; and the crimes of every age have been of sufficient magnitude to provoke the punishment, and to exercise the utmost kindness of the Deity! What, for instance, must be the sensations of Eternal Perfection, at the sight of all that variety of

crimes perpetrated in a single day, within the precincts of every large city? What must he, who comprehends at one view all the transactions of the world, feel, as he surveys that astonishing mass of mischief, fraud, malignity, blasphemy, and meanness, committed constantly beneath his penetrating eye? Mercy is certainly his distinguished attribute. Amongst men, we call him a forgiving character, who passes over, with impunity, some petty affront, or injury, in social life: the parent is esteemed amiable, who pardons an offending child; and to resist giving blow for blow, when the temptation to recriminate seems to lie fairly open, is thought to be a sublime effort of human excellence. But how do these virtues dwindle, when we place them near the clemency of the Omnipotent! Notwithstanding the thousand insults that are daily directed by man against his Maker, how very, very seldom his red right arm is raised to destroy! And even when impiety, with the strides of a giant, towers onward to the throne, with what superior mildness of majesty he closes his eye upon the audacity, as unwilling to see what his justice must have punished! Amidst his greatness, he sits enthroned, continuing to dispense a blessing where a curse is frequently deserved: and in the very moment that man is murmuring at his regulations, with how much kindness does he persist in bestowing his bounty, till even the complainer is silenced and ashamed? Well then, indeed, may we exclaim, with a universal voice of sincerity, "Blessed be the name of the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever."

C. MELMOTH:

SECTION IV.

The folly and misery of idleness.

THE idle man lives not to himself, with any more advantage than he lives to the world. It is indeed on a supposition entirely opposite, that persons of this character proceed. They imagine that, how deficient soever they may be in point of duty, they at least consult their own satisfaction. They leave to others the drudgery of life ; and betake themselves, as they think, to the quarter of enjoyment and ease. Now, in contradiction to this, I assert, and hope to prove, that the idle man, first, shuts the door against all improvement ; next, that he opens it wide to every destructive folly ; and, lastly, that he excludes himself from the true enjoyment of pleasure.

First, he shuts the door against improvement of every kind, whether of mind, body, or fortune. The law of our nature, the condition under which we were placed from our birth, is, that nothing good or great is to be acquired, without toil and industry. A price is appointed by Providence to be paid for every thing ; and the price of improvement, is labour. Industry may, indeed, be sometimes disappointed. The race may not be always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. But, at the same time, it is certain that, in the ordinary course of things, without strength, the battle cannot be gained ; without swiftness, the race cannot be run with success. If we consult either the improvement of the mind, or the health of the body, it is well known that exercise is the great instrument of promoting both. Sloth enfeebles equally the bodily, and

the mental powers. As in the animal system it engenders disease, so on the faculties of the soul it brings a fatal rust, which corrodes and wastes them ; which, in a short time, reduces the brightest genius to the same level with the meanest understanding. The great differences which take place among men, are not owing to a distinction that nature has made in their original powers, so much as to the superior diligence with which some have improved these powers beyond others. To no purpose do we possess the seeds of many great abilities, if they are suffered to lie dormant within us. It is not the latent possession, but the active exertion of them, which gives them merit. Thousands whom indolence has sunk into contemptible obscurity, might have come forward to the highest distinction, if idleness had not frustrated the effect of all their powers.

Instead of going on to improvement, all things go to decline, with the idle man. His character falls into contempt. His fortune is consumed. Disorder, confusion, and embarrassment, mark his whole situation. Observe in what lively colours the state of his affairs is described by Solomon. “ I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding. And lo ! it was all grown over with thorns ; nettles had covered the face thereof ; and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well. I looked upon it, and received instruction.” Is it in this manner, that a man lives to himself ? Are these the advantages, which were expected to be found in the lap of ease ? The down may at first have appeared soft ; but it will soon be found to cover thorns innumerable. This is, however, only a

small part of the evils which persons of this description bring on themselves ; for,

In the second place, while in this manner they shut the door against every improvement, they open it wide to the most destructive vices and follies. The human mind cannot remain always unemployed. Its passions must have some exercise. If we supply them not with proper employment, they are sure to run loose into riot and disorder. While we are unoccupied by what is good, evil is continually at hand ; and hence it is said in Scripture, that as soon as Satan “ found the house empty,” he took possession, and filled it “ with evil spirits.” Every man who recollects his conduct, may be satisfied, that his hours of idleness have always proved the hours most dangerous to virtue. It was then, that criminal desires arose ; guilty pursuits were suggested : and designs were formed, which, in their issue, have disquieted and embittered his whole life. If seasons of idleness are dangerous, what must a continued habit of it prove ? Habitual indolence, by a silent and secret progress, undermines every virtue in the soul. More violent passions run their course, and terminate. They are like rapid torrents, which foam, and swell, and bear down every thing before them. But after having overflowed their banks, their impetuosity subsides. They return, by degrees, into their natural channel ; and the damage which they have done, can be repaired. Sloth is like the slowly-flowing, putrid stream, which stagnates in the marsh, breeds venomous animals, and poisonous plants ; and infects with pestilential vapours the whole country round it. Having once tainted the soul, it leaves no part of it sound ; and, at the same time, gives not those alarms

to conscience, which the eruptions of bolder and fiercer emotions often occasion. The disease which it brings on, is creeping and insidious ; and is, on that account, more certainly mortal.

One constant effect of idleness, is to nourish the passions, and, of course, to heighten our demands for gratification ; while it unhappily withdraws from us the proper means of gratifying these demands. If the desires of the industrious man are set upon opulence or distinction, upon the conveniences, or the advantages of life, he can accomplish his desires, by methods which are fair and allowable. The idle man has the same desires with the industrious, but not the same resources for compassing his ends by honourable means. He must therefore turn himself to seek by fraud, or by violence, what he cannot submit to acquire by industry. Hence, the origin of those multiplied crimes to which idleness is daily giving birth in the world ; and which contribute so much to violate the order, and to disturb the peace of society. In general, the children of idleness may be ranked under two denominations or classes of men. Either, incapable of any effort, they are such as sink into absolute meanness of character, and contentedly wallow with the drunkard and debauchee, among the herd of the sensual, until poverty overtakes them, or disease cuts them off ; or, they are such as, retaining some remains of vigour, are impelled, by their passions, to venture on a desperate attempt for retrieving their ruined fortunes. In this case, they employ the art of the fraudulent gamester to ensnare the unwary. They issue forth with the highwayman to plunder on the road ; or with the thief and the robber, they infest the city by night. From this class,

our prisons are peopled ; and by them the scaffold is furnished with those melancholy admonitions, which are so often delivered from it to the crowd. Such are frequently the tragical, but well known, consequences of the vice of idleness.

In the third and last place, how dangerous soever idleness may be to virtue, are there not pleasures, it may be said, which attend it? Is there not ground to plead, that it brings a release from the oppressive cares of the world ; and soothes the mind with a gentle satisfaction, which is not to be found amidst the toils of a busy and active life ? This is an advantage which, least of all others, we admit it to possess. In behalf of incessant labour, no man contends. Occasional release from toil, and indulgence of ease, is what nature demands, and virtue allows. But what we assert is, that nothing is so great an enemy to the lively and spirited enjoyment of life, as a relaxed and indolent habit of mind. He who knows not what it is to labour, knows not what it is to enjoy. The felicity of human life, depends on the regular prosecution of some laudable purpose or object, which keeps awake and enlivens all our powers. Our happiness consists in the pursuit much more than in the attainment, of any temporal good. Rest is agreeable ; but it is only from preceding labours, that rest requires its true relish. When the mind is suffered to remain in continued inaction, all its powers decay. It soon languishes and sickens ; and the pleasures which it proposed to obtain from rest, end in tediousness and insipidity. To this, let that miserable set of men bear witness, who, after spending great part of their life in active industry, have retired to what they fancied was to be a pleasing

enjoyment of themselves, in wealthy inactivity, and profound repose. Where they expected to find an elysium, they have found nothing but a dreary and comfortless waste. Their days have dragged on, in uniform langour ; with the melancholy remembrance often returning, of the cheerful hours they passed, when they were engaged in the honest business, and labours of the world.

We appeal to every one who has the least knowledge or observation of life, whether the busy, or the idle, have the most agreeable enjoyment of themselves ? Compare them in their families. Compare them in the societies with which they mingle ; and remark, which of them discover most cheerfulness and gaiety, which possess the most regular flow of spirits ; whose temper is most equal ; whose good humour, most unclouded. While the active and diligent both enliven and enjoy society, the idle are not only a burden to themselves, but a burden to those with whom they are connected ; a nuisance to all whom they oppress with their company.

Enough has now been said to convince every thinking person, of the folly, the guilt, and the misery, of an idle state. Let these admonitions stir us up to exert ourselves in our different occupations, with that virtuous activity which becomes men and Christians. Let us arise from the bed of sloth ; distribute our time with attention and care ; and improve to advantage the opportunities which Providence has bestowed.—The material business in which our several stations engage us, may often prove not sufficient to occupy the whole of our time and attention. In the life even of busy men, there are frequent intervals of leisure. Let

them take care, that into these, none of the vices of idleness creep. Let some secondary, some subsidiary employment, of a fair and laudable kind, be always at hand to fill up those vacant spaces of life, which too many assign, either to corrupting amusements, or to mere inaction. We ought never to forget, that entire idleness always borders, either on misery, or on guilt.

At the same time, let the course of our employments be ordered in such a manner, that in carrying them on, we may be also promoting our eternal interest. With the business of the world, let us properly intermix the exercises of devotion. By religious duties, and virtuous actions, let us study to prepare ourselves for a better world. In the midst of our labours for this life, it ought never to be forgotten, that we must “first seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and give diligence to make our calling and election sure:” otherwise, how active soever we may seem to be, our whole activity will prove only a laborious idleness: we shall appear in the end, to have been busy to no purpose, or to a purpose worse than none. Then only we fulfill the proper character of Christians, when we join that pious zeal which becomes us as the servants of God, with that industry which is required of us, as good members of society; when, according to the exhortation of the Apostle, we are found “not slothful in business,” and, at the same time, “servant in spirit, serving the Lord.”

BLAIR.

SECTION V.

The choice of our situation in life, a point of great importance.

THE influence of a new situation of external fortune is so great; it gives so different a turn to our temper

and affections, to our views and desires, that no man can foretell what his character would prove, should be either raised or depressed in his circumstances, in a remarkable degree ; or placed in some sphere of action, widely different from that to which he has been accustomed in former life.

The seeds of various qualities, good and bad, lie in all our hearts. But until proper occasions ripen, and bring them forward, they lie there inactive and dead. They are covered up and concealed within the recesses of our nature : or, if they spring up at all, it is under such an appearance as is frequently mistaken, even by ourselves. Pride, for instance, in certain situations, has no opportunity of displaying itself, but as magnanimity, or sense of honour. Avarice appears as necessary and laudable economy. What in one station of life would discover itself to be cowardice and baseness of mind, passes in another for prudent circumspection. What in the fulness of power would prove to be cruelty and oppression, is reputed, in a subordinate rank, no more than the exercise of proper discipline. For a while, the man is known neither by the world, nor by himself, to be what he truly is. But bring him into a new situation of life, which accords with his predominant disposition ; which strikes on certain latent qualities of his soul, and awakens them into action ; and as the leaves of a flower gradually unfold to the sun, so shall all his true character open full to view.

This may, in one light, be accounted not so much an alteration of character, produced by a change of circumstances, as a discovery brought forth of the real character, which formerly lay concealed. Yet, at the same time, it is true that the man himself undergoes a

change. For opportunity being given for certain dispositions, which had been dormant, to exert themselves without restraint, they of course gather strength. By means of the ascendancy which they gain, other parts of the temper are borne down; and thus an alteration is made in the whole structure and system of the soul. He is a truly wise and good man, who, through Divine assistance, remains superior to this influence of fortune on his character: who, having once imbibed worthy sentiments, and established proper principles of action, continues constant to these, whatever his circumstances be; maintains, throughout all the changes of his life, one uniform and supported tenor of conduct; and what he abhorred as evil and wicked in the beginning of his days, continues to abhor to the end. But how rare is it to meet with this honourable consistency among men, while they are passing through the different stations and periods of life! When they are setting out in the world, before their minds have been greatly misled or debased, they glow with generous emotions, and look with contempt on what is sordid and guilty. But advancing farther in life, and inured by degrees to the crooked ways of men; pressing through the crowd, and the bustle of the world; obliged to contend with this man's craft, and that man's scorn; accustomed, sometimes, to conceal their sentiments, and often to stifle their feelings, they become at last hardened in heart, and familiar with corruption. Who would not drop a tear over this sad, but frequent fall of human probity and honour! Who is not humbled, when he beholds the refined sentiments and high principles on which we are so ready to value ourselves, brought to such a shameful issue; and man, with all his boasted at-

tainments of reason, discovered so often to be the creature of his external fortune, moulded and formed by the incidents of his life !

Let us for a moment reflect on the dangers which arise from stations of power and greatness ; especially, when the elevation of men to these has been rapid and sudden. Few have the strength of mind which is requisite for bearing such a change with temperance and self-command. The respect which is paid to the great, and the scope which their condition affords for the indulgence of pleasure, are perilous circumstances to virtue. When men live among their equals, and are accustomed to encounter the hardships of life, they are of course reminded of their mutual dependence on each other, and of the dependence of all upon God. But when they are highly exalted above their fellows, they meet with few objects to awaken serious reflection, and with many to feed and inflame their passions. They are apt to separate their interest from that of all around them ; to wrap themselves up in their vain grandeur ; and, in the lap of indolence and selfish pleasure, to acquire a cold indifference to the concerns even of those whom they call their friends. The fancied independence into which they are lifted up, is adverse to sentiments of piety, as well as of humanity, in their heart.

But we are not to imagine, that elevated stations in the world furnish the only formidable trials to which our virtue is exposed. It will be found, that we are liable to no fewer, nor less dangerous temptations, from the opposite extreme of poverty and depression. When men who have known better days are thrown down into abject situations of fortune, their spirits are broken

and their tempers soured: envy rankles in their breast at such as are more successful: the providence of Heaven is accused in secret murmers; and the sense of misery is ready to push them into atrocious crimes, in order to better their state. Among the inferior classes of mankind, craft and dishonesty are too often found to prevail. Low and penurious circumstances depress the human powers. They deprive men of the proper means of knowledge and improvement; and where ignorance is gross, it is always in hazard of engendering profligacy.

Hence it has been, generally, the opinion of wise men in all ages, that there is a certain middle condition of life, equally remote from either of those extremes of fortune, which, though it wants not also its own dangers, yet is, on the whole, the state most favourable both to virtue and to happiness. For there, luxury and pride on the one hand, have not opportunity to enervate or intoxicate the mind, nor want and dependence on the other, to sink and debase it; there, all the native affections of the soul have the freest and fairest exercise, the equality of men is felt, friendships are formed, and improvements of every sort are pursued with most success; there, men are prompted to industry without being overcome by toil, and their powers called forth into exertion, without being either superseded by too much abundance, or baffled by insuperable difficulties; there, a mixture of comforts and of wants, at once awakens their gratitude to God, and reminds them of their dependence on his aid; and therefore, in this state, men seem to enjoy life to most advantage, and to be least exposed to the snares of vice.

From what has been said, we learn the importance of attending, with the utmost care, to the choice which we make of our employment and condition in life. It has been shown, that our external situation frequently operates powerfully on our moral character ; and by consequence that it is strictly connected, not only with our temporal welfare, but with our everlasting happiness or misery. He who might have passed unblamed, and upright, through certain walks of life, by unhappily choosing a road where he meets with temptations too strong for his virtue, precipitates himself into shame here, and into endless ruin hereafter. Yet how often is the determination of this most important article left to the chance of accidental connexions, or submitted to the option of youthful fancy and humour ! When it is made the subject of serious deliberation, how seldom have they, on whom the decision of it depends, any further view than so to dispose of one who is coming out into life, as that he may the soonest become rich, or, as is expressed, make his way to most advantage in the world ! Are there no other objects than this to be attended to, in fixing the plan of life ? Are there not sacred and important interests which deserve to be consulted ?—We would not willingly place one whose welfare we studied, in a situation for which we were convinced that his abilities were unequal. These, therefore, we examine with care ; and on them we rest the ground of our decision. It is, however, certain, that not abilities merely, but the turn of the temper and the heart, require to be examined with equal attention, in forming the plan of future establishment. Every one has some peculiar weakness, some predominant passion, which exposes

him to temptations of one kind more than of another. Early this may be discerned to shoot ; and from its first risings its future growth may be inferred. Anticipate its progress. Consider how it is likely to be affected, by succeeding occurrences in life. If we bring one whom we are rearing up into a situation, where all the surrounding circumstances shall cherish and mature this fatal principle in his nature, we become, in a great measure, answerable for the consequences that follow. In vain we trust to his abilities and powers. Vice and corruption, when they have tainted the heart, are sufficient to overset the greatest abilities. Nay, too frequently they turn them against the possessor ; and render them the instruments of his more speedy ruin.

BLAIR.

SECTION VI.

The vision of Mirza; exhibiting a picture of human life.

ON the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always kept holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life ; and passing from one thought to another, Surely, said I, man is but a shadow, and life a dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, but who was in reality a being of superior nature. I drew near

with profound reverence, and fell down at his feet. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability, that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, Mirza, said he, I have heard thee in thy soliloquies ; follow me.

He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, Cast thy eyes eastward, said he, and tell me what thou seest. I see, said I, a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it. The valley that thou seest, said he, is the vale of misery ; and the tide of water that thou seest, is part of the great tide of eternity. What is the reason, said I, that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other ? What thou seest, said he, is that portion of eternity which is called Time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now, said he, this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it. I see a bridge, said I, standing in the midst of the tide. The bridge thou seest, said he, is human life ; consider it attentively. Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of three score and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand ; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. But tell me further, said he, what thou discoverest on it. I see multitudes of people passing

over it, said I, and a black cloud hanging on each end of it. As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and, upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, than they fell through them into the tide, and immediately disappeared.—These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud than many fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire. There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy, to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them, to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and, in the midst of a speculation, stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles, that glittered in their eyes, and danced before them; but often, when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge,

thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

The genius seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. Take thine eyes off the bridge, said he, and tell me if thou seest any thing thou dost not comprehend. Upon looking up, What mean, said I, those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures, several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches. These, said the genius, are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.

I here fetched a deep sigh : Alas, said I, man was made in vain ! how is he given away to misery and mortality ! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death ! The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. Look no more said he, on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity ; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it. I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or not the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it

infomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean, planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers. Gladness grew in me at the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. The islands, said he, that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore. There are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination, can extend itself. These are mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them: every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward! Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.—I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At

length, said I, shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds, which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant. The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me. I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating ; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels, grazing upon the sides of it.

SPECTATOR.

SECTION VII.

Character of the Great Founder of Christianity.

NEVER was there on earth any other person of so extraordinary a character as the Founder of our religion. In him we uniformly see a mildness, dignity, and composure, and a perfection of wisdom and of goodness, that plainly point him out as a superior being. But his superiority was all in his own divine mind. He had none of those outward advantages that have distinguished all other law-givers. He had no influence in the state ; he had no wealth ; he aimed at no worldly power. He was the son of a carpenter's wife, and he was himself a carpenter. So poor were his reputed parents, that at the time of his birth his mother could obtain no better lodging than a stable, and so poor was he himself, that he often had no lodging at all. That he had no advantages of education, we may infer from the surprise expressed by his neighbours on hearing him speak in the synagogue : " Whence hath this man these things ? What wisdom is this which

is given him? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? Are not his brethren and sisters with us?" This point, however, we need not insist on; as from no education, that his own or any other country could have afforded, was it possible for him to derive that supernatural wisdom and power, that sanctity of life, and that purity of doctrine, which so eminently distinguish him. His first adherents were a few fishermen; for whom he was so far from making any provision, that, when he sent them out to preach repentance and heal diseases, they were, by his desire, furnished with nothing, but one coat, a pair of sandals, and a staff. He went about, in great humility and meekness, doing good, teaching wisdom, and glorifying God, for the space of about three years after the commencement of his ministry; and then, as he himself had foreseen and foretold, he was publicly crucified.—This is the great personage, who at this day gives law to the world. This is he, who has been the author of virtue and happiness to millions and millions of the human race. And this is he whom the wisest and best men that ever lived have revered as a Divine Person, and gloried in as the deliverer and saviour of mankind. DR. BEATTIE.

SECTION VIII.

The spirit and laws of Christianity superior to those of every other religion.

THE morality of the gospel gives it an infinite superiority over all systems of doctrine that ever were devised by man. Were our lives and opinions to be regulated as it prescribes, nothing would be wanting to make us happy: there would be no injustice, no impiety, no

disorderly passions. Harmony and love would universally prevail. Every man, content with his lot, resigned to the Divine Will, and fully persuaded that a happy eternity is before him, would pass his days in tranquillity and joy, to which neither anxiety, nor pain, nor even the fear of death, could ever give any interruption. The best system of pagan ethics are very imperfect, and not free from absurdity; and in them are recommended modes of thinking unsuitable to human nature, and modes of conduct which, though they might have been useful in a political view, did not tend to virtue and happiness universal. But of all our Lord's institutions the end and aim is, to promote the happiness, by promoting the virtue, of all mankind.

In the next place; his peculiar doctrines are not like any thing of human contrivance. "Never man spake like this man." One of the first names given to that dispensation of things which he came to introduce, was the kingdom, or the reign, of heaven. It was justly so called; being thus distinguished, not only from the religion of Moses, the sanctions whereof related to the present life, but also from every human scheme of moral, political, or ecclesiastical legislation.

The views of the heathen moralist extended not beyond this world; those of the Christian are fixed on that which is to come. The former was concerned for his own country only or chiefly; the latter takes concern in the happiness of all men, of all nations, conditions, and capacities. A few, and but a few, of the ancient philosophers, spoke of a future state of retribution as a thing desirable, and not improbable: revelation speaks of it as certain; and of the present life as a state of trial, wherein virtue or holiness is necessary,

not only to entitle us to that salvation which, through the mercy of God and the merits of his Son, Christians are taught to look for, but also to prepare us, by habits of piety and benevolence, for a reward, which none but the pure in heart can receive, or could relish.

The duties of piety, as far as the heart is concerned, were not much attended to by the heathen lawgivers. Cicero coldly ranks them with the social virtues, and says very little about them. The sacrifices were mere ceremony. And what the Stoicks taught of resignation to the will of heaven, or to the decrees of fate, was so repugnant to some of their other tenets, that little good could be expected from it. But of every Christian virtue piety is an essential part. The love and the fear of God must every moment prevail in the heart of a follower of Jesus; and whether he eat or drink, or whatever he do, it must all be to the glory of the Creator. How different this from the philosophy of Greece and Rome!

In a word, the heathen morality, even in its best form, that is, as two or three of their best philosophers taught it, amounts to little more than this: "Be useful to yourselves, your friends, and your country; so shall you be respectable while you live, and honoured when you die; and it is to be hoped you may receive a reward in another life." The language of the Christian lawgiver is different. "The world is not worthy of the ambition of an immortal being. Its honours and pleasures have a tendency to debase the mind, and disqualify it for future happiness. Set therefore your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. Let it be your supreme desire to obtain the favour of God; and, by a course of discipline, prepare

yourselfes for a re-admission into that rank which was forfeited by the fall ; and for being again but a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour everlasting.”

What an elevation must it give to our pious affections, to contemplate the Supreme Being and his Providence, as revealed to us in Scripture ! We are there taught, that man was created in the image of God, innocent and happy : and that he had no sooner fallen into sin, than his Creator, instead of abandoning him, and his offspring, to the natural consequences of his disobedience, and of their hereditary depravity, was pleased to begin a wonderful dispensation of grace, in order to rescue from perdition, and raise again to happiness, as many as should acquiesce in the terms of the offered salvation, and regulate their lives accordingly.

By the sacred books, that contain the history of this dispensation, we are further taught, that God is a spirit, unchangeable, and eternal, universally present, and absolutely perfect ; that it is our duty to fear him, as a being of consummate purity and inflexible justice, and to love him as the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation ; to trust in him as the friend, the comforter, and the almighty guardian of all who believe and obey him ; to rejoice in him as the best of Beings, and adore him as the greatest.—We are taught, that he will make allowance for the frailties of our nature, and pardon the sins of those who repent :—and, that we may see, in the strongest light, his peculiar benignity to the human race, we are taught, that he gave his only Son as our ransom and deliverer ; and we are not only permitted, but commanded, to pray to him,

and address him as our Father:—we are taught, moreover, that the evils incident to this state of trial are permitted by him, in order to exercise our virtue, and prepare us for a future state of never-ending felicity; and that these momentary afflictions are pledges of his paternal love, and shall, if we receive them as such, and venerate them accordingly, work out for us “an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory.” If these hopes and these sentiments contribute more to our happiness, and to the purification of our nature, than any thing else in the world can do, surely that religion, to which alone we owe these sentiments and hopes, must be the greatest blessing that ever was conferred on the posterity of Adam.

Christianity proposes to our imitation the highest examples of benevolence, purity, and piety. It shows, that all our actions, purposes, and thoughts, are to us of infinite importance; their consequences being nothing less than happiness or misery in the life to come: and thus it operates most powerfully on our self-love. By teaching, that all mankind are brethren; by commanding us to love our neighbour as ourselves; and by declaring every man our neighbour, to whom we have it in our power to do good, it improves benevolence to the highest pitch. By prohibiting revenge, malice, pride, vanity, envy, sensuality and covetousness, and by requiring us to forgive, to pray for, and to bless our enemies, and to do to others as we would that they should do to us, it lays a restraint on every malevolent and turbulent passion; and reduces the whole of social virtue to two or three precepts; so brief, that they cannot be forgotten; so plain, that they cannot be misunderstood; so reasonable, that no man of sense

controverts them ; and so well suited to human nature and human affairs, that every candid mind may easily, and on all occasions apply them to practice.

Christianity recommends the strictest self-attention, by this awful consideration, that God is continually present with us, knows what we think, as well as what we do, and will judge the world in righteousness, and render unto every man according to his works. It makes us consider conscience, as his voice and law within us ; purity of heart, as that which alone can qualify us for the enjoyment of future reward ; and mutual love, or charity, as that without which all other virtues and accomplishments are of no value : and, by a view of things peculiarly striking, it causes vice to appear a most pernicious and abominable thing, which cannot escape punishment. In a word, “ Christianity,” as Bishop Taylor well observes, “ is a doctrine in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome ; and in which there is nothing wanting, which can procure happiness to mankind, or by which God can be glorified.”

DR. BEATTIE.

SECTION IX.

Creation the product of Divine Goodness.

CREATION is a display of Supreme goodness, no less than of wisdom and power. It is the communication of numberless benefits, together with existence, to all who live. Justly is the earth said to be “ full of the goodness of the Lord.” Throughout the whole system of things, we behold a manifest tendency to promote the benefit either of the rational, or the animal crea-

tion. In some parts of nature, this tendency may be less obvious than in others. Objects, which to us seem useless, or hurtful, may sometimes occur; and strange it were, if in so vast and complicated a system, difficulties of this kind should not occasionally present themselves to beings, whose views are so narrow and limited as ours. It is well known, that in proportion as the knowledge of nature has increased among men, these difficulties have diminished. Satisfactory accounts have been given of many perplexing appearances. Useful and proper purposes have been found to be promoted, by objects which were, at first, thought unprofitable or noxious.

Malignant must be the mind of that person; with a distorted eye he must have contemplated creation, who can suspect, that it is not the production of Infinite Benevolence and Goodness. How many clear marks of benevolent intention appear, every where around us! What a profusion of beauty and ornament is poured forth on the face of nature! What a magnificent spectacle presented to the view of man! What supply contrived for his wants! What a variety of objects set before him, to gratify his senses, to employ his understanding, to entertain his imagination, to cheer and gladden his heart! Indeed, the very existence of the universe is a standing memorial of the goodness of the Creator. For nothing except goodness could originally prompt creation. The Supreme Being, self-existent and all-sufficient, had no wants which he could seek to supply. No new accession of felicity or glory was to result to him, from creatures which he made. It was goodness communicating and pouring itself forth, goodness delighting to impart happiness in all its forms, which in

the beginning created the heaven and the earth.— Hence, those innumerable orders of living creatures with which the earth is peopled ; from the lowest class of sensitive being, to the highest rank of reason and intelligence. Wherever there is life, there is some degree of happiness ; there are enjoyments suited to the different powers of feeling ; and earth, and air, and water, are, with magnificent liberality, made to teem with life.

Let those striking displays of Creating Goodness call forth, on our part, responsive love, gratitude, and veneration. To this great Father of all existence and life, to Him who hath raised us up to behold the light of day, and to enjoy all the comforts which his world presents, let our hearts send forth a perpetual hymn of praise. Evening and morning let us celebrate Him, who maketh the morning and the evening to rejoice over our heads ; who, “ openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.” Let us rejoice, that we are brought into a world, which is the production of Infinite Goodness ; and over which a Supreme Intelligence presides. Convinced that he hateth not the works which he hath made, nor hath brought creatures into existence, merely to suffer unnecessary pain, let us, even in the midst of sorrow, receive, with calm submission, whatever he is pleased to send ; thankful for what he bestows ; and satisfied, that, without good reason, he takes nothing away.

It is not in the tremendous appearances of power merely, that a good and well-instructed man beholds the Creator of the world. In the constant and regular working of his hands, in the silent operations of his wisdom and goodness, ever going on throughout

nature, he delights to contemplate and adore him.— This is one of the chief fruits to be derived from that more perfect knowledge of the Creator, which is imparted to us by the Christian revelation. Impressing our minds with a just sense of all his attributes, as not wise and great only, but as gracious and merciful, let it lead us to view every object of calm and undisturbed nature, with a perpetual reference to its Author. We shall then behold all the scenes which the heavens and the earth present, with more refined feelings, and sublimer emotions, than they who regard them solely as objects of curiosity, or amusement. Nature will appear animated, and enlivened, by the presence of its Author. When the sun rises or sets in the heavens ;— when spring paints the earth, when summer shines in its glory, when autumn pours forth its fruits, or winter returns in its awful forms, we shall view the Creator manifesting himself in his works. We shall meet his presence in the fields. We shall feel his influence in the cheering beam. We shall hear his voice in the wind. We shall behold ourselves every where surrounded with the glory of that universal spirit, who fills, pervades, and, upholds all. We shall live in the world as in a great and august temple ; where the presence of the Divinity, who inhabits it, inspires devotion.

BLAIR.

SECTION X.

The benefits of religious retirement.

AN entire retreat from worldly affairs, is not what religion requires ; nor does it even enjoin a great retreat from them. Some stations of life would not per-

mit this; and there are few stations which render it necessary. The chief field, both of the duty and of the improvement of man, lies in active life. By the graces and virtues which he exercises amidst his fellow-creatures, he is trained up for heaven. A total retreat from the world, is so far from being the perfection of religion, that some particular cases excepted, it is no other than the abuse of it.

But, though entire retreat would lay us aside from the part for which Providence chiefly intended us, it is certain, that, without occasional retirement, we must act that part very ill. There will be neither consistency in the conduct, nor dignity in the character, of one who sets apart no share of his time for meditation and reflection. In the heat and bustle of life, while passion is every moment throwing false colours on the objects around us, nothing can be viewed in a just light. If we wish that reason should exert her native power, we must step aside from the crowd, into the cool and silent shade. It is there that, with sober and steady eye, she examines what is good or ill, what is wise or foolish, in human conduct; she looks back on the past, she looks forward to the future; and forms plans, not for the present moment only, but for the whole of life. How should that man discharge any part of his duty aright, who never suffers his passions to cool? and how should his passions cool, who is engaged, without interruption, in the tumult of the world? This incessant stir may be called, the perpetual drunkenness of life. It raises that eager fermentation of spirit, which will be ever sending forth the dangerous fumes of rashness and folly. Whereas he who mingles religious retreat with worldly affairs, re-

mains calm, and master of himself. He is not whirled round, and rendered giddy, by the agitation of the world ; but, from that sacred retirement, in which he has been conversant among higher objects, comes forth into the world with manly tranquility, fortified by the principles which he has formed, and prepared for whatever may befall.

As he who is unacquainted with retreat, cannot sustain any character with propriety, so neither can he enjoy the world with any advantage. Of the two classes of men who are most apt to be negligent of this duty, the men of pleasure, and the men of business, it is hard to say which suffer most, in point of enjoyment, from that neglect. To the former, every moment appears to be lost, which partakes not of the vivacity of amusement. To connect one plan of gaiety with another, is their whole study ; till, in a very short time, nothing remains but to tread the same beaten round ; to enjoy what they have already enjoyed, and to see what they have often seen. Pleasures thus drawn to the dregs, become vapid and tasteless. What might have pleased long, if enjoyed with temperance, and mingled with retirement, being devoured with such eager haste, speedily surfeits and disgusts. Hence, these are the persons, who, after having run through a rapid course of pleasure, after having glittered for a few years in the foremost line of public amusements, are the most apt to fly at last to a melancholy retreat ; not led by religion or reason, but driven by disappointed hopes, and exhausted spirits, to the pensive conclusion, that “all is vanity.”

If uninterrupted intercourse with the world wears out the man of pleasure, it no less oppresses the man

of business and ambition. The strongest spirits must at length sink under it. The happiest temper must be soured by incessant returns of the opposition, the inconstancy, and treachery of men. For he who lives always in the bustle of the world, lives in a perpetual warfare. Here an enemy encounters ; there, a rival supplants him. The ingratitude of a friend stings him this hour ; and the pride of a superior wounds him the next. In vain he flies for relief to trifling amusements. These may afford a temporary opiate to care ; but they communicate no strength to the mind. On the contrary, they leave it more soft and defenceless, when molestations and injuries renew their attack.

Let him who wishes for an effectual cure to all the wounds which the world can inflict, retire from intercourse with men to intercourse with his Creator.—When he enters into his closet, and shuts the door, let him shut out, at the same time, all intrusion of worldly care ; and dwell among objects divine and immortal.—Those fair prospects of order and peace, shall there open to his view, which form the most perfect contrast to the confusion and misery of this earth. The celestial inhabitants quarrel not ; among them there is neither ingratitude, nor envy, nor tumult. Men may harass one another ; but in the kingdom of heaven concord and tranquillity reign for ever.—From such objects, there beams upon the mind of the pious man, a pure and enlivening light ; there is diffused over his heart, a holy calm. His agitated spirit reasumes its firmness, and regains its peace. The world sinks in its importance ; and the load of mortality and misery loses almost all its weight. The “green pastures” open, and the “still waters” flow around him, beside which

the “Shepherd of Israel” guides his flock. The disturbances and alarms, so formidable to those who are engaged in the tumults of the world, seem to him only like thunder rolling afar off ; like the noise of distant waters, whose sound he hears, whose course he traces, but whose waves touch him not.

As religious retirement is thus evidently conducive to our happiness in this life, so it is absolutely necessary in order to prepare us for the life to come. He who lives always in public, cannot live to his own soul. Our conversation and intercourse with the world, is, in several respects, an education for vice. From our earliest youth, we are accustomed to hear riches and honours extolled as the chief possessions of man ; and proposed to us, as the principal aim of our future pursuits. We are trained up, to look with admiration on the flattering marks of distinction which they bestow. In quest of those fancied blessings, we see the multitude around us eager and fervent. Principles of duty, we may, perhaps, hear sometimes inculcated ; but we seldom behold them brought into competition with worldly profit. The soft names, and plausible colours, under which deceit, sensuality, and revenge, are presented to us in common discourse, weaken by degrees, our natural sense of the distinction between good and evil. We often meet with crimes authorised by high examples, and rewarded with the caresses and smiles of the world. Thus breathing habitually a contagious air, how certain is our ruin, unless we sometimes retreat from this pestilential region, and seek for proper correctives of the disorders which are contracted there ? Religious retirement both abates the disease, and furnishes the remedy. It lessens the corrupting

influence of the world; and it gives opportunity for better principles to exert their power. Solitude is the hallowed ground which religion hath, in every age, chosen for her own. There, her inspiration is felt, and her secret mysteries elevate the soul; there, falls the tear of contrition; there, rises towards heaven the sigh of the heart; there, melts the soul with all the tendernefs of devotion, and pours itself forth before him who made, and him who redeemed it. How can any one who is unacquainted with such employments of mind, be fit for heaven? If heaven be the habitation of pure affections, and of intellectual joy, can such a state be relished by him who is always immerfed among fenfible objects, and has never acquired any tafte for the pleasures of the understanding, and the heart.

The great and the worthy, the pious and the virtuous, have ever been addicted to ferious retirement. It is the characteristic of little and frivolous minds, to be wholly occupied with the vulgar objects of life.—These fill up their defires, and fupply all the entertainment which their coarfe apprehenfions can relifh. But a more refined and enlarged mind leaves the world behind it, feels a call for higher pleasures, and feeks them in retreat. The man of public fpirit has recourfe to it, in order to form plans for general good; the man of genius, in order to dwell on his favourite themes: the philofopher, to purfue his discoveries; the faint, to improve himfelf in grace. “Ifaac went out to meditate in the fields, at the evening tide.”—David, amidft all the fplendour of royalty, often bears witnefs both to the pleasure which he received, and to the benefit which he reaped, from devout meditation.

Our blessed Saviour himself, though of all who ever lived on earth he needed least the assistance of religious retreat, yet, by his frequent practice, has done it signal honour. Often were the garden, the mountain, and the silence of the night, sought by him, for intercourse with Heaven. "When he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain, apart, to pray."

The world is the great deceiver, whose fallacious arts it highly imports us to detect. But in the midst of its pleasures and pursuits, the detection is impossible. We tread, as within an enchanted circle, where nothing appears as it truly is. It is only in retreat, that the charm can be broken. Did men employ that retreat not in carrying on the delusion which the world has begun, not in forming plans of imaginary bliss, but in subjecting the happiness which the world affords to a strict discussion, the spell would dissolve; and in the room of the unreal prospects, which had long amused them, the nakedness of the world would appear.

Let us prepare ourselves, then, to encounter the light of truth; and resolve rather to bear the disappointment of some flattering hopes, than to wander for ever in the paradise of fools. While others meditate in secret on the means of attaining worldly success, let it be our employment to scrutinize that success itself. Let us calculate fairly to what it amounts; and whether we are not losers on the whole, by our apparent gain. Let us look back for this purpose, on our past life. Let us trace it from our earliest youth; and put the question to ourselves, What have been its happiest periods? Were they those of quiet and innocence, or those of ambition and intrigue? Has our real enjoy-

ment uniformly kept pace with what the world calls prosperity? As we advanced in wealth or station, did we proportionally advance in happiness? Has success, almost in any one instance, fulfilled our expectations? Where we reckoned upon most enjoyment, have we not often found least? Wherever guilt entered into pleasure, did not its sting long remain, after the gratification was past?—Such questions as these candidly answered, would in a great measure unmask the world. They would expose the vanity of its pretensions; and convince us, that there are other springs than those which the world affords, to which we must apply for happiness.

While we commune with our heart concerning what the world now is, let us consider also what it will one day appear to be. Let us anticipate the awful moment of our bidding it an eternal farewell; and think, what reflections shall most probably arise, when we are quitting the field, and looking back on the scene of action. In what light will our closing eyes contemplate those vanities which now shine so bright, and those interests which now swell into such high importance? What part shall we then wish to have acted? What will then appear momentous, what trifling, in human conduct?—Let the sober sentiments which such anticipations suggest, temper now our misplaced ardour. Let the last conclusions which we shall form, enter into the present estimate which we make of the world, and of life.

Moreover, in communing with ourselves concerning the world, let us contemplate it as subject to the Divine dominion. The greater part of men behold nothing more than the rotation of human affairs. They see a great crowd ever in motion; the fortunes

of men alternately rising and falling; virtue often distressed, and prosperity appearing to be the purchase of worldly wisdom. But this is only the outside of things; behind the curtain, there is a far greater scene, which is beheld by none but the retired, religious spectator. If we lift up that curtain, when we are alone with God, and view the world with the eye of a Christian; we shall see, that while “man’s heart deviseth his way, it is the Lord who directeth his steps.” We shall see, that however men appear to move and act after their own pleasure, they are, nevertheless, retained in secret bonds by the Almighty, and all their operations rendered subservient to the ends of his moral government. We shall behold him obliging “the wrath of man to praise him;” punishing the sinner by means of his own iniquities; from the trials of the righteous, bringing forth their reward; and to a state of seeming universal confusion, preparing the wisest and most equitable issue. While the fashion “of this world” is passing fast away, we shall discern the glory of another rising to succeed it. We shall behold all human events, our griefs and our joys, our love and our hatred, our character and memory, absorbed in the ocean of eternity; and no trace of our present existence left, except its being for ever “well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked.”

BLAIR.

SECTION XI.

Man often deluded by idle hopes and fallacious appearances.

IN the reign of Jenghiz Khan, conqueror of the East, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce and the integrity of his

dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hastened to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance; and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin. After some time, he felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified and called for help upon the sages of physic. They filled his apartments with alexipharmies, restoratives, and essential virtues. The pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son; and dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man. Look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain: the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: 'His root,' she cried,

‘is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top.’

“Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate: look upon me, and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain. My house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance: but the hand of death is upon me; a cold torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom.” The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father’s death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin’s profession, and the re-

putation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns ; and found the treasures greater to his eye than they had been to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men ; he therefore believed that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more. He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger ; the wise men of the state combined against him ; the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger ; he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself by an alliance with the princes of Tartary ; and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused ; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda : command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion, and disdained him : “ How,” says she, “ dares the wretch

hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance ? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation ; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.”

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels. These amusements pleased him for a time ; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons.— Change of place at first relieved his satiety ; but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted : he found his heart vacant ; and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies ; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls ; and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness ; every hour was crowded with pleasure ; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out ; “ I have at last found the use of riches ; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy ; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be

repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly regaling at his expense : but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and in the form of legal citation summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast ; then stole imperceptibly away ; and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation ; yet, unpatronised and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth ; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses ; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. " Brother," said the philosopher, " thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them ; and to expect from them what experience has now taught thee that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayst be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon

thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncoun tenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless: there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them. They may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease; still the throbs of restless anxiety; relieve innocence from oppression; and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform; and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of Divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

DR. JOHNSON.

SECTION XII.

The vanity of those pursuits which have human approbation for their chief object.

AMONG the emirs and viziers, the sons of valour and of wisdom, that stand at the corners of the Indian throne, to assist the councils, or conduct the wars of the posterity of Timur, the first place was long held by Morad, the son of Hanuth. Morad having signalized himself in many battles and sieges, was rewarded with the government of a province, from which the fame of his wisdom and moderation was wafted to the pin-

nacles of Agra, by the prayers of those whom his administration made happy. The Emperour called him into his presence, and gave into his hand the keys of riches, and the sabre of command. The voice of Morad was heard from the cliffs of Taurus to the Indian ocean: every tongue faltered in his presence, and every eye was cast down before him.

Morad lived many years in prosperity: every day increased his wealth, and extended his influence. The sages repeated his maxims; the captains of thousands waited his commands. Competition withdrew into the cavern of envy, and discontent trembled at her own murmurs. But human greatness is short and transitory, as the odour of incense in the fire. The sun grew weary of gilding the palaces of Morad; the clouds of sorrow gathered round his head; and the tempest of hatred roared about his dwelling.

Morad saw ruin hastily approaching. The first that forsook him were his poets. Their example was followed by all those whom he had rewarded for contributing to his pleasures; and only a few whose virtue had entitled them to favour, were now to be seen in his hall or chambers. He felt his danger, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. His accusers were confident and loud; his friends stood contented with frigid neutrality; and the voice of truth was overborne by clamour. He was divested of his power deprived of his acquisitions, and condemned to pass the rest of his life on his hereditary estate.

Morad had been so long accustomed to crowds and business, supplicants and flattery, that he knew not how to fill up his hours in solitude. He saw, with regret, the sun rise to force on his eye a new day for

which he had no use ; and envied the savage that wanders in the desert, because he has no time vacant from the calls of nature, but is always chasing his prey, or sleeping in his den.

His discontent in time vitiated his constitution, and a slow disease seized upon him. He refused physic, neglected exercise, and lay down on his couch peevish and restless, rather afraid to die, than desirous to live. His domestics, for a time, redoubled their assiduities ; but finding that no officiousness could soothe, nor exactness satisfy, they soon gave way to negligence and sloth ; and he that once commanded nations, often languished in his chamber without an attendant.

In this melancholy state, he commanded messengers to recall his eldest son, Abouzaid, from the army. Abouzaid was alarmed at the account of his father's sickness ; and hastened, by long journeys, to his place of residence. Morad was yet living, and felt his strength return at the embraces of his son : then commanding him to sit down at his bed side, " Abouzaid," said he, " thy father has no more to hope or fear from the inhabitants of the earth ; the cold hand of the angel of death is now upon him, and the voracious grave is howling for his prey. Hear therefore the precepts of ancient experience : let not my last instructions issue forth in vain. Thou hast seen me happy and calamitous ; thou hast beheld my exaltation and my fall. My power is in the hands of my enemies, my treasures have rewarded my accusers : but my inheritance the clemency of the emperour has spared, and my wisdom his anger could not take away. Cast thine eyes round thee : whatever thou beholdest will, in a few hours, be thine : apply thine ear to my

dictates, and these possessions will promote thy happiness. Aspire not to public honours ; enter not the palaces of kings : thy wealth will set thee above insult, let thy moderation keep thee below envy. Content thyself with private dignity ; diffuse thy riches among thy friends, let every day extend thy beneficence ; and suffer not thy heart to be at rest, till thou art loved by all to whom thou art known. In the height of my power, I said to defamation, Who will hear thee ? and to artifice, What canst thou perform ? But, my son, despise not thou the malice of the weakest ; remember that venom supplies the want of strength ; and that the lion may perish by the puncture of an asp."

Morad expired in a few hours. Abouzaid, after the months of mourning, determined to regulate his conduct by his father's precepts ; and cultivate the love of mankind by every art of kindness and endearment. He wisely considered, that domestic happiness was first to be secured ; and that none have so much power of doing good or hurt, as those who are present in the hour of negligence, hear the bursts of thoughtless merriment, and observe the starts of unguarded passion. He therefore augmented the pay of all his attendants ; and requited every exertion of uncommon diligence by supernumerary gratuities. While he congratulated himself upon the fidelity and affection of his family, he was in the night alarmed with robbers ; who being pursued and taken, declared that they had been admitted by one of his servants.—The servant immediately confessed, that he unbarred the door, because another not more worthy of confidence was entrusted with the keys.

Abouzaid was thus convinced, that a dependent could not easily be made a friend ; and that while many

were soliciting for the first rank of favour, all those would be alienated whom he disappointed. He therefore resolved to associate with a few equal companions selected from among the chief men of the province. With these he lived happily for a time, till familiarity set them free from restraint, and every man thought himself at liberty to indulge his own caprice, and advance his own opinions. They then disturbed each other with contrariety of inclinations, and difference of sentiments; and Abouzaid was necessitated to offend one party by concurrence, or both by indifference.

He afterwards determined to avoid a close union with beings so discordant in their nature, and to diffuse himself in a larger circle. He practised the smile of universal courtesy; and invited all to his table, but admitted none to his retirements. Many who had been rejected in his choice of friendship, now refused to accept his acquaintance: and of those whom plenty and magnificence drew to his table, every one pressed forward toward intimacy, thought himself overlooked in the crowd, and murmured, because he was not distinguished above the rest. By degrees, all made advances, and all resented repulse. The table was then covered with delicacies in vain; the music sounded in empty rooms; and Abouzaid was left to form, in solitude, some new scheme of pleasure or security.

Resolving now to try the force of gratitude, he inquired for men of science, whose merit was obscured by poverty. His house was soon crowded with poets, sculptors, painters, and designers, who wantoned in unexperienced plenty; and employed their powers in celebration of their patron. But in a short time they forgot the distress from which they had been rescued;

and began to consider their deliverer as a wretch of narrow capacity, who was growing great by works which he could not perform, and whom they overpaid by condescending to accept his bounties. Abouzaid heard their murmurs, and dismissed them; and from that hour continued blind to colours, and deaf to panegyric.

As the sons of art departed, muttering threats of perpetual infamy, Abouzaid, who stood at the gate, called to him Hamet the poet. "Hamet," said he, "thy ingratitude has put an end to my hopes and experiments. I have now learned the vanity of those labours that wish to be rewarded by human benevolence. I shall henceforth do good, and avoid evil, without respect to the opinion of men; and resolve to solicit only the approbation of that Being, whom alone we are sure to please by endeavouring to please him."

DR. JOHNSON.

SECTION XIII.

Servius Sulpicius to Cicero, on the death of his daughter.

I RECEIVED the news of your daughter's death, with all the concern it so justly deserves; and indeed I cannot but consider it as a misfortune in which I bear an equal share with yourself. If I had been near you when this fatal accident happened, I should not only have mingled my tears with yours, but assisted you with all the consolation in my power. I am sensible, at the same time, that offices of this kind afford at best but a wretched relief; for as none are qualified to perform them, but those who stand near to us by the

ties either of blood or affection, such persons are generally too much afflicted themselves, to be capable of administering comfort to others. Nevertheless, I thought proper to suggest a few reflections which occurred to me upon this occasion ; not as imagining they would be new to you, but believing that in your present discomposure of mind, they might possibly have escaped your attention. Tell me then, my friend, wherefore do you indulge this excess of sorrow? Reflect, I entreat you, in what manner fortune has dealt with every one of us ; that she has deprived us of what ought to be no less dear than our children, and overwhelmed in one general ruin our honours, our liberties, and our country. And after these losses, is it possible that any other should increase our tears ? Is it possible that a mind long exercised in calamities so truly severe, should not become almost callous, and indifferent to every event? But you will tell me, perhaps, that your grief arises not so much on your own account, as on that of Tullia. Yet surely you must often, as well as myself, have had occasion in these wretched times to reflect, that their condition by no means deserves to be regretted, whom death has gently removed from this unhappy scene. What is there, let me ask, in the present circumstances of our country, that could have rendered life greatly desirable to your daughter? What pleasing hopes, what agreeable views, what rational satisfaction could she possibly have proposed to herself from a more extended period? Was it in the prospect of conjugal happiness in the society of some distinguished youth? as if, indeed, you could have found a son-in-law amongst our present set of young men, worthy of being intrusted with the care of your daughter! Or was it in

the expectation of being the joyful mother of a flourishing race, who might possess their patrimony with independence, who might gradually rise through the several dignities of the state, and exert the liberty to which they were born in the service and defence of their friends and country? But is there one amongst all these desirable privileges, of which we were not deprived before she was in a capacity of transmitting them to her descendants? Yet after all, you may still allege, perhaps, that the loss of our children is a severe affliction; and unquestionably it would be so, if it were not a much greater, to see them live to endure those indignities which their parents suffer.

I lately fell into a reflection, which, as it afforded great relief to the disquietude of my own heart, may possibly contribute likewise to assuage the anguish of yours. In my return out of Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I amused myself with contemplating the circumjacent countries. Behind me lay Ægina, before me Megara; on my right I saw Piræus, and on my left, Corinth. These cities, once so flourishing and magnificent, now presented nothing to my view but a sad spectacle of desolation. "Alas!" I said to myself, "shall such a short-lived creature as man complain, when one of his species falls either by the hand of violence, or by the common course of nature; whilst in this narrow compass so many great and glorious cities, formed for a much longer duration, thus lie extended in ruins? Remember then, oh my heart! the general lot to which man is born; and let that thought suppress thy unreasonable murmurs." Believe me, I found my mind greatly refreshed and comforted by these reflections. Let me advise you in

the same manner to represent to yourself, what numbers of our illustrious countrymen have been lately cut off at once ; how much the strength of the Roman republic is impaired, and what dreadful devastation has gone forth throughout all its provinces. And can you, with the impression of these greater calamities upon your mind, be so immoderately afflicted for the loss of a single individual, a poor, little, tender woman ; who, if she had not died at this time, must in a few fleeting years more have inevitably undergone that common fate to which she was born ?

Reasonable, however, as these reflections are, I would call you from them awhile, in order to lead your thoughts to others more peculiarly suitable to your circumstances and character. Remember then, that your daughter lived till liberty was no more ; that she lived to see you in the illustrious offices of prætor, consul, and augur ; to be married happily ; to be blessed with almost every valuable enjoyment ; and at length to expire with the republic itself. Tell me now, what is there in this view of her fate, that could give either her or yourself just reason to complain ? In fine, do not forget that you are Cicero, the wise, the philosophical Cicero, who were wont to give advice to others ; nor resemble those unskilful empirics, who at the same time that they pretend to be furnished with remedies for other men's disorders, are altogether incapable of finding a cure for their own. On the contrary, apply to your private use those judicious precepts you have administered to the public. Time necessarily weakens the strongest impressions of sorrow ; but it would be a reproach to your character not to anticipate this its certain effect, by the force of your

own good sense and judgment. If the dead retain any consciousness of what is here transacted, your daughter's affection, I am sure, was such both to you and to all her relations, that she can by no means desire you should abandon yourself to this excess of grief. Restrain it then, I conjure you, for her sake, and for the sake of the rest of your family and friends, who lament to see you thus afflicted. Restrain it too, I beseech you, for the sake of your country ; that whenever the opportunity shall serve, it may reap the benefit of your counsels and assistance. In short, since such is our fortune that we must necessarily submit to the present system of public affairs, suffer it not to be suspected, that it is not so much the death of your daughter, as the fate of the Republic, and the success of our victors, that you deplore.

But it would be ill-manners to dwell any longer upon this subject, as I should seem to question the efficacy of your own good sense. I will only add, therefore, that as we have often seen you bear prosperity in the noblest manner, and with the highest applause ; show us likewise that you are not too sensible of adversity, but know how to support it with the same advantage to your character. In a word, let it not be said, that fortitude is the single virtue to which my friend is a stranger.

MELMOTH'S CICERO.

SECTION XIV.

TO PHILOTES.

Against cruelty to insects.

I FEAR I shall lose all my credit with you as a gardener, by this specimen which I venture to send you of the produce of my walls. The snails, indeed, have had

more than their share of my peaches and nectarines this season; but will you not smile when I tell you, that I deem it a sort of cruelty to destroy them unnecessarily? I should scarce dare to acknowledge this weakness, (as the generality of the world, no doubt, would call it,) had I not experienced, by many agreeable instances, that I may safely lay open to you every sentiment of my heart. To confess the truth, then, I have some scruples with respect to the liberty we assume in the unlimited destruction of those lower orders of existence. I know not upon what principle of reason and justice it is, that mankind have founded their right over the lives of every creature placed in a subordinate rank of being to themselves. Whatever claim they may have in right of food and self-defence, did they extend their privilege no farther than those two articles would reasonably carry them, numberless beings might enjoy their lives in peace, who are now hurried out of them by the most wanton and unnecessary cruelties. I cannot, indeed, discover why it should be thought less inhuman to crush to death a harmless insect, whose single offence is, that he eats that food which nature has prepared for his sustenance, than it would be, were I to kill any bulky creature for the same reason. There are few tempers so hardened to the impressions of humanity, as not to shudder at the thought of the latter; and yet the former is universally practised without the least check of compassion. This seems to arise from the gross error of supposing, that every creature is really in itself contemptible, which happens to be clothed with a body infinitely disproportionate to our own; not considering that great and little are merely relative terms.

The sensations of many insects are as exquisite as those of creatures of far more enlarged dimensions, perhaps even more so. The millepedes, for instance, rolls itself round, upon the slightest touch, and the snail gathers in its horns upon the least approach of our hand. Are not these the strongest indications of their sensibility? and is it any evidence of ours, that we are not therefore induced to treat them with a more sympathizing tenderness?

I was extremely pleased with a sentiment I met with the other day in honest Montaigne. That good-natured author remarks, that there is a certain claim of kindness and benevolence which every species of creatures has a right to from us. It is to be regretted that this general maxim is not more attended to, in the affair of education, and pressed home upon tender minds in its full extent and latitude. I am far, indeed, from thinking, that the early delight which children discover in tormenting flies, &c. is a mark of any innate cruelty of temper, because this turn may be accounted for on other principles; and it is entertaining unworthy notions of the Deity, to suppose he forms mankind with a propensity to the most detestable of all dispositions: but most certainly by being unrestrained in sports of this kind, they may acquire by habit, what they never would have learned from nature, and grow up into a confirmed inattention to every kind of suffering but their own. Accordingly, the supreme court of judicature at Athens thought an instance of this sort not below its cognizance, and punished a boy for putting out the eyes of a poor bird that had unhappily fallen into his hands.

It might be of service, therefore, in order to awaken, as early as possible in children, an extensive sense of

humanity, to give them a view of several sorts of insects as they may be magnified by the assistance of glasses ; and to show them that the same evident marks of wisdom and goodness prevail in the formation of the minutest insect, as in that of the most enormous leviathan : that they are equally furnished with whatever is necessary, not only to the preservation, but the happiness of their beings in that class of existence to which Providence has assigned them : in a word, that the whole construction of their respective organs distinctly proclaims them the objects of the Divine benevolence, and therefore that they justly ought to be so of ours. I am, &c.

W. MELMOTH.

SECTION XV.

History of ten days of Seged, Emperour of Ethiopia.

Of heav'n's protection who can be
So confident to utter this ?—
To-morrow I will spend in bliss.

F. LEWIS.

SEGED, lord of Ethiopia, to the inhabitants of the world : to the sons of presumption, humility and fear ; and to the daughters of sorrow, content and acquiescence.

Thus, in the twenty seventh year of his reign, spoke Seged, the monarch of forty nations, the distributor of the waters of the Nile : “ At length, Seged, thy toils are at an end ; thou hast reconciled disaffection, thou hast suppressed rebellion, thou hast pacified the jealousies of thy courtiers, thou hast chased war from thy confines, and erected fortresses in the lands of thy

enemies. All who have offended thee, tremble in thy presence; and wherever thy voice is heard it is obeyed. Thy throne is surrounded by armies, numerous as the locusts of the summer, and resistless as the blasts of pestilence. Thy magazines are stored with ammunition, thy treasures overflow with the tribute of conquered kingdoms. Plenty waves upon thy fields, and opulence glitters in thy cities. Thy nod is as the earth-quake that shakes the mountains, and thy smile as the dawn of the vernal day. In thy hand is the strength of thousands, and thy health is the health of millions. Thy palace is gladdened by the song of praise, and thy path perfumed by the breath of benediction. Thy subjects gaze upon thy greatness, and think of danger or misery no more. Why, Seged, wilt not thou partake the blessings thou bestowest? Why shouldst thou only forbear to rejoice in this general felicity? Why should thy face be clouded with anxiety, when the meanest of those who call thee sovereign, gives the day to festivity, and the night to peace. At length, Seged, reflect and be wise. What is the gift of conquest but safety? Why are riches collected but to purchase happiness?"

Seged then ordered the house of pleasure, built in an island of the lake Dambea, to be prepared for his reception. "I will retire," says he, "for ten days from tumult and care, from councils and decrees. Long quiet is not the lot of the governors of nations, but a cessation of ten days cannot be denied me. This short interval of happiness may surely be secured from the interruption of fear or perplexity, sorrow or disappointment. I will exclude all trouble from my abode, and remove from my thoughts whatever may confuse the harmony of the concert, or abate the sweetness of

the banquet. I will fill the whole capacity of my soul with enjoyment, and try what it is to live without a wish unsatisfied."

In a few days the orders were performed, and Seged hastened to the palace of Dambea, which stood in an island cultivated only for pleasure, planted with every flower that spreads its colours to the sun, and every shrub that sheds fragrance in the air. In one part of this extensive garden, were open walks for excursions in the morning; in another, thick groves, and silent arbours, and bubbling fountains for repose at noon. All that could solace the sense, or flatter the fancy; all that industry could extort from nature, or wealth furnish to art; all that conquest could seize, or beneficence attract, was collected together, and every perception of delight was excited and gratified.

Into this delicious region Seged summoned all the persons of his court, who seemed eminently qualified to receive or communicate pleasure. His call was readily obeyed; the young, the fair, the vivacious, and the witty, were all in haste to be sated with felicity. They sailed jocund over the lake, which seemed to smooth its surface before them: their passage was cheered with music, and their hearts dilated with expectation.

Seged landing here with his band of pleasure, determined from that hour to break off all acquaintance with discontent; to give his heart for ten days to ease and jollity, and then to fall back to the common state of man, and suffer his life to be diversified, as before, with joy and sorrow.

He immediately entered his chamber to consider where he should begin his circle of happiness. He had all the artists of delight before him, but knew not whom

to call, since he could not enjoy one, but by delaying the performance of another ; he chose and rejected, he resolved and changed his resolution, till his faculties were harrassed, and his thoughts confused ; then returned to the apartment where his presence was expected, with languid eyes, and clouded countenance, and spread the infection of uneasiness over the whole assembly. He observed their depression, and was offended ; for he found his vexation increased by those whom he expected to dissipate and relieve it. He retired again to his private chamber, and sought for consolation in his own mind ; one thought flowed in upon another ; a long succession of images seized his attention ; the moments crept imperceptibly away through the gloom of pensiveness, till, having recovered his tranquillity, he lifted up his head, and saw the lake brightened by the setting sun. “ Such,” said Seged, sighing, “ is the longest day of human existence : before we have learned to use it, we find it at an end.”

The regret which he felt for the loss of so great a part of his first day, took from him all disposition to enjoy the evening ; and, after having endeavoured, for the sake of his attendants, to force an air of gaiety, and excite that mirth which he could not share, he resolved to defer his hopes to the next morning ; and lay down to partake with the slaves of labour and poverty the blessing of sleep.

He rose early the second morning, and resolved now to be happy. He therefore fixed upon the gate of the palace an edict, importing, that whoever, during nine days, should appear in the presence of the king with a dejected countenance, or utter any expression of dis-

content or sorrow, should be driven for ever from the palace of Dambea.

This edict was immediately made known in every chamber of the court, and bower of the gardens. Mirth was frightened away, and they who were before dancing in the lawns, or singing in the shades, were at once engaged in the care of regulating their looks, that Seged might find his will punctually obeyed, and see none among them liable to banishment.

Seged now met every face settled in a smile; but a smile that betrayed solicitude, timidity, and constraint. He accosted his favourites with familiarity and softness; but they durst not speak without premeditation, lest they should be convicted of discontent or sorrow. He proposed diversions, to which no objection was made, because objection would have implied uneasiness; but they were regarded with indifference by the courtiers, who had no other desire than to signalize themselves by clamorous exultation. He offered various topics of conversation, but obtained only forced jests, and laborious laughter; and after many attempts to animate his train to confidence and alacrity, was obliged to confess to himself the impotence of command, and resign another day to grief and disappointment.

He at last relieved his companions from their terrors, and shut himself up in his chamber, to ascertain, by different measures, the felicity of the succeeding days. At length, he threw himself on the bed, and closed his eyes, but imagined, in his sleep, that his palace and gardens were overwhelmed by an inundation, and waked with all the terrors of a man struggling in the water. He composed himself again to rest, but was frightened by an imaginary irruption into his kingdom;

and striving, as is usual in dreams, without ability to move, fancied himself betrayed to his enemies, and again started up with horror and indignation.

It was now day, and fear was so strongly impressed on his mind, that he could sleep no more. He rose, but his thoughts were filled with the deluge and invasion; nor was he able to disengage his attention, or mingle with vivacity and ease in any amusement. At length his perturbation gave way to reason, and he resolved no longer to be harassed by visionary miseries; but before this resolution could be completed, half the day had elapsed. He felt a new conviction of the uncertainty of human schemes, and could not forbear to bewail the weakness of that being, whose quiet was to be interrupted by vapours of the fancy. Having been first disturbed by a dream, he afterwards grieved that a dream could disturb him. He at last discovered, that his terrors and grief were equally vain; and that to lose the present in lamenting the past, was voluntarily to protract a melancholy vision. The third day was now declining, and Seged again resolved to be happy on the morrow.

SECTION XVI.

The same subject continued.

ON the fourth morning Seged rose early, refreshed with sleep, vigorous with health, and eager with expectation. He entered the garden attended by the princes and ladies of his court, and seeing nothing about him but airy cheerfulness, began to say to his heart, "This day shall be a day of pleasure." The

fun played upon the water, the birds warbled in the groves, and the gales quivered among the branches. He roved from walk to walk as chance directed him, and sometimes listened to the songs, sometimes mingled with the dancers, sometimes let loose his imagination in flights of merriment; and sometimes uttered grave reflections, and sententious maxims, and feasted on the admiration with which they were received.

Thus the day rolled on, without any accident of vexation, or intrusion of melancholy thoughts. All that beheld him caught gladness from his looks, and the sight of happiness, conferred by himself, filled his heart with satisfaction: but having passed three hours in this pleasing luxury, he was alarmed on a sudden by a universal scream among the women; and turning back, saw the whole assembly flying in confusion. A young crocodile had risen out of the lake, and was ranging the garden in wantonness or hunger. Seged beheld him with indignation, as a disturber of his felicity, and chased him back into the lake; but could not persuade his retinue to stay, or free their hearts from the terror which had seized upon them. The princesses enclosed themselves in the palace, and could yet scarcely believe themselves in safety. Every attention was fixed upon the late danger and escape, and no mind was any longer at leisure for gay sallies, or careless prattle.

Seged had now no other employment, than to contemplate the innumerable casualties, which lie in ambush on every side to intercept the happiness of man, and break in upon the hour of delight and tranquillity. He had, however, the consolation of thinking, that he had not been now disappointed by his own fault; and that the accident which had blasted

the hopes of the day, might easily be prevented by future caution.

That he might provide for the pleasure of the next morning, he resolved to repeal his penal edict, since he had already found, that discontent and melancholy were not to be frightened away by the threats of authority, and that pleasure would only reside where she was exempted from control. He therefore invited all the companions of his retreat to unbounded pleasantries, by proposing prizes for those who should, on the following day, distinguish themselves by any festive performances; the tables of the anti-chamber were covered with gold and pearls, and robes and garlands decreed the rewards of those who could refine elegance, or heighten pleasure.

At this display of riches every eye immediately sparkled, and every tongue was busied in celebrating the bounty and magnificence of the emperor. But when Seged entered, in hopes of uncommon entertainment from universal emulation, he found, that any passion too strongly agitated, puts an end to that tranquillity which is necessary to mirth; and that the mind that is to be moved by the gentle ventilations of gaiety, must be first smoothed by a total calm. Whatever we ardently wish to gain, we must, in the same degree, be afraid to lose; and fear and pleasure cannot dwell together.

All was now care and solicitude. Nothing was done or spoken, but with so visible an endeavour at perfection, as always failed to delight, though it sometimes forced admiration: and Seged could not but observe with sorrow, that his prizes had more influence than himself. As the evening approached, the contest grew

more earnest ; and those who were forced to allow themselves excelled, began to discover the malignity of defeat, first by angry glances, and at last by contemptuous murmurs. Seged likewise shared the anxiety of the day ; for considering himself as obliged to distribute with exact justice, the prizes which had been so zealously fought, he durst never remit his attention, but passed his time upon the rack of doubt, in balancing different kinds of merit, and adjusting the claims of all the competitors. At last, knowing that no exactness could satisfy those whose hopes he should disappoint ; and thinking, that on a day set apart for happiness, it would be cruel to oppress any heart with sorrow ; he declared, that all had pleased him alike, and dismissed all with presents of equal value.

Seged soon saw that his caution had not been able to avoid offence. They who had believed themselves secure of the highest prizes, were not pleased to be levelled with the crowd ; and though, by the liberality of the king, they received more than his promise had entitled them to expect, they departed unsatisfied, because they were honoured with no distinction, and wanted an opportunity to triumph in the mortification of their opponents. " Behold here," said Seged, " the condition of him who places his happiness in the happiness of others." He then retired to meditate ; and while the courtiers were repining at his distributions, saw the fifth sun go down in discontent.

The next dawn renewed his resolution to be happy. But having learned how little he could effect by settled schemes, or preparatory measures, he thought it best to give up one day entirely to chance, and left every one to please and be pleased in his own way.

This relaxation of regularity diffused a general complacency through the whole court; and the emperour imagined, that he had at last found the secret of obtaining an interval of felicity. But as he was roving in this careless assembly with equal carelessness, he overheard one of his courtiers in a close arbour murmuring alone: "What merit has Seged above us, that we should thus fear and obey him? a man, whom whatever he may have formerly performed, his luxury now shows to have the same weakness with ourselves." This charge affected him the more, as it was uttered by one whom he had always observed among the most abject of his flatterers. At first his indignation prompted him to severity; but reflecting, that what was spoken without intention to be heard, was to be considered as only thought, and was perhaps but the sudden burst of casual and temporary vexation, he invented some decent pretence to send him away, that his retreat might not be tainted with the breath of envy; and after the struggle of deliberation was past, and all desire of revenge utterly suppressed, passed the evening not only with tranquillity, but triumph, though none but himself was conscious of the victory.

The remembrance of this clemency cheered the beginning of the seventh day; and nothing happened to disturb the pleasure of Seged, till looking on the tree that shaded him, he recollected, that under a tree of the same kind he had passed the night after his defeat in the kingdom of Goiama. The reflection on his loss, his dishonour, and the miseries which his subjects suffered from the invader, filled him with sadness. At last he shook off the weight of sorrow, and began to solace himself with his usual pleasures, when his tran-

quillity was again disturbed by jealousies which the late contest for the prizes had produced, and which, having tried to pacify them by persuasion, he was forced to silence by command.

On the eighth morning Seged was awakened early by an unusual hurry in the apartments ; and inquiring the cause, he was told that the Princess Balkis was seized with sickness. He rose, and calling the physicians, found that they had little hope of her recovery. Here was an end of jollity : all his thoughts were now, upon his daughter, whose eyes he closed on the tenth day.

Such were the days which Seged of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war, and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter may presume to say, “ This day shall be a day of happiness.”

DR. JOHNSON.



PART II.

PIECES IN POETRY.



CHAPTER I.

NARRATIVE PIECES.

SECTION I.

Happiness.

YE ductile youths, whose rising sun
Hath many circles still to run ;
Who wisely wish the pilot's chart,
To steer thro' life th' unsteady heart ;
And all the thoughtful voyage past,
To gain a happy port at last ;
Attend a seer's instructive song,
For moral truths to dreams belong.
I saw this wondrous vision soon,
Long ere my sun had reach'd its noon ;
Just when the rising beard began
To grace my chin, and call me man.

One night, when balmy slumbers shed
Their peaceful poppies o'er my head,
My fancy led me to explore
A thousand scenes unknown before.
I saw a plain extended wide,
And crowds pour'd in from every side.

All seem'd to start a different game,
 Yet all declar'd their views the same :
 The chafe was Happiness, I found,
 But all, alas ! enchanted ground.
 Indeed I judg'd it wond'rous strange,
 To see the giddy numbers range
 Thro' roads, which promis'd nought, at best,
 But sorrow to the human breast.
 Methought, if blifs was all their view,
 Why did they diff'rent paths pursue.
 The waking world has long agreed,
 That Bagshot's not the road to Tweed :
 And he who Berwick seeks thro' Staines,
 Shall have his labour for his pains.
 As Parnel says, my bosom wrought
 With travail of uncertain thought ;
 And, as an angel help'd the dean,
 My angel chose to intervene :
 The drefs of each was much the same,
 And Virtue was my seraph's name.
 When thus the angel silence broke :
 (Her voice was music as she spoke :)

" Attend, O man, nor leave my side,
 And safety shall thy footsteps guide :
 Such truths I'll teach, such secrets show,
 As none but favour'd mortals know."
 She said—and straight we march'd along
 To join Ambition's active throng :
 Crowds urg'd on crowds with eager pace,
 And happy he who led the race.
 Axes and daggers lay unseen
 In ambuscade along the green ;

While vapours shed delusive light,
And bubbles mock'd the distant sight.
We saw a shining mountain rise,
Whose tow'ring summit reach'd the skies :
The slopes were steep, and form'd of glass,
Painful and hazardous to pass :
Courtiers and statesmen led the way,
The faithless paths their steps betray ;
This moment seen aloft to soar,
The next to fall and rise no more.
'Twas here Ambition kept her court ;
A phantom of gigantic port :
The fav'rite that sustain'd her throne,
Was Falsehood, by her vizard known.
Next stood Mistrust, with frequent sigh,
Disorder'd look, and squinting eye ;
While meagre envy claim'd a place,
And Jealousy with jaundic'd face.

“ But where is Happiness ? ” I cry'd :
My guardian turn'd, and thus reply'd,
“ Mortal, by folly still beguil'd,
Thou hast not yet outstripp'd the child.
Go to the school-boy, he shall preach,
What twenty winters cannot teach.
He'll tell thee, from his weekly theme,
That thy pursuit is all a dream :
That Bliss ambitious views disowns,
And self-dependant, laughs at thrones ;
Prefers the shades and lowly seats,
Whither fair Innocence retreats :
So the coy lily of the vale,
Shuns eminence, and loves the dale.”

I blush'd ; and now we cross'd the plain,
 To find the money getting train ;
 Those silent, snug, commercial bands,
 With busy looks, and dirty hands.
 Amidst these thoughtful crowds the old
 Plac'd all their happiness in gold :
 And surely, if there's bliss below,
 These hoary heads the secret know.
 We journey'd with the plodding crew,
 When soon a temple rose to view :
 A Gothic pile, with moss o'ergrown ;
 Strong were the walls, and built with stone.
 Without a thousand mastsiffs wait :
 A thousand bolts secure the gate.
 We sought admission long in vain ;
 For here all favours sell for gain :
 The greedy porter yields to gold,
 His fee receiv'd, the gates unfold.
 Assembled nations here we found,
 And view'd the cringing herds around,
 Who daily sacrific'd to Wealth,
 Their honour, conscience, peace, and health.
 We hasten now to Pleasure's bow'rs ;
 Where the gay tribes sit crown'd with flow'rs.
 Here Beauty ev'ry charm display'd,
 And Love disturb'd the blushing maid :
 Delicious wine our taste employs,
 His crimson bowl exalts our joys.
 I felt the gen'rous pow'r, and thought
 The pearl was found, that long I sought.
 Determin'd here to fix my home,
 I bless'd the change, nor wish'd to roam :

The seraph disapprov'd my stay,
Spread her fair plumes, and wing'd away.

Alas ! whene'er we talk of blifs,
How prone is man to judge amifs !
See, a long train of ills conspires
To scourge our uncontrol'd desires.
Like summer swarms, Diseases crowd ;
Each bears a crutch, or each a shroud.
Fever, that thirsty fury, came,
With inextinguishable flame.
Consumption, sworn ally of Death,
Crept slowly on with panting breath.
Gout roar'd, and shew'd his throbbing feet :
And Dropsy took the drunkard's seat.
Stone brought his tort'ring racks ; and near
Sat Palsy shaking in her chair !

As he, who travels Lybia's plains,
Where the fierce lion lawless reigns,
Is seiz'd with fear and wild dismay,
When the grim foe obstructs his way :
My soul was pierc'd with equal fright,
My tott'ring limbs oppos'd my flight ;
I call'd on Virtue, but in vain ;
Her absence quicken'd every pain.
At length the slighted angel heard ;
The dear refulgent form appear'd.

“ Presumptuous youth ! ” she said, and frown'd,
(My heart-strings flutter'd at the sound,)
“ Who turns to me reluctant tears,
Shall shed repeated floods of tears.
These rivers shall for ever last,
There's no retracting what is past :

Nor think avenging ills to shun ;
 Make a false step, and you're undone.

“ Of Pleasure's gilded baits beware,
 Nor tempt the Syren's fatal snare :
 Forego this baneful, fatal place,
 Abhor the harlot, and her race.
 Had you those softer paths pursu'd,
 Perdition, stripling, had ensu'd.
 Yes, fly—you stand upon its brink :
 To-morrow is too late to think.

“ Indeed unwelcome truths I tell ;
 But mark my sacred lesson well.
 With me whoever lives at strife,
 Loses his better friend for life :
 With me who lives in Friendship's ties,
 Finds all that's fought for by the wife.
 Folly exclaims, and well she may,
 Because I take her mask away ;
 If once I bring her to the sun,
 The painted harlot is undone.
 But prize, my child, oh ! prize my rules,
 And leave Deception to her fools.

“ Ambition deals in tinsel toys,
 Her traffic gewgaws, fleeting joys !
 An arrant juggler in disguise,
 Who holds false optics to your eyes.
 But ah ! how quick the shadows pass !
 Tho' the bright visions thro' her glass
 Charm at a distance ; yet, when near,
 The baseless fabrics disappear.

“ Nor Riches boast intrinsic worth ;
 Their charms at best, superior earth :

These oft the heav'n-born mind enslave,
And make an honest man a knave.
'Wealth cures my wants,' the miser cries :
Be not deceiv'd—the miser lies.
One want he has, with all his store,
That worst of wants ! the want of more.

“ Take Pleasure, Wealth, and Pomp away,
And where is Happiness ? you say.
'Tis here—and may be yours—for, know,
I'm all that's Happiness below.
To Vice I leave tumultuous joys ;
Mine is the still and softer voice,
That whispers peace when storms invade,
And music thro' the midnight shade.

“ Come then, be mine in ev'ry part,
Nor give me less than all your heart :
When troubles discompose your breast,
'I'll enter there a cheerful guest.
My converse shall your cares beguile,
The little world within shall smile :
And then it scarce imports a jot,
Whether the great world frowns or not.

“ And when the closing scenes prevail,
When wealth, state, pleasure, all shall fail ;
All that a foolish world admires,
Our Passion craves, or Pride-inspires ;
At that important hour of need,
Virtue shall prove a friend indeed !
My hands shall smooth thy dying bed,
My arms sustain thy drooping head :
And when the painful struggle's o'er,
And that vain thing, the world's no more ;
I'll bear my fav'rite son away
To rapture, and eternal day.”

COTTON.

SECTION II.

The Three Warnings.

THE tree of deepest root is found
 Least willing still to quit the ground ;
 'Twas therefore said by ancient sages,
 That love of life increas'd with years
 So much, that in our latter stages,
 When pains grow sharp, and sickness rages,
 The greatest love of life appears.
 This great affection to believe,
 Which all confess, but few perceive,
 If old assertions can't prevail,
 Be pleas'd to hear a modern tale.

When sports went round, and all were gay,
 On neighbour Dodson's wedding-day,
 Death call'd aside the jocund groom
 With him into another room ;
 And looking grave—" You must," says he,
 " Quit your sweet bride, and come with me."
 " With you ! and quit my Susan's side !
 With you !" the hapless husband cried ;
 " Young as I am, 'tis monstrous hard !
 Besides, in truth, I'm not prepar'd :
 My thoughts on other matters go ;
 This is my wedding-day you know."

What more he urg'd, I have not heard,
 His reasons could not well be stronger ;
 So death the poor delinquent spar'd,
 And left to live a little longer.
 Yet calling up a serious look,
 His hour-glass trembled while he spoke—

“ Neighbour,” he said, “ farewell ; no more
Shall Death disturb your mirthful hour :
And farther, to avoid all blame
Of cruelty upon my name,
To give you time for preparation,
And fit you for your future station,
Three several warnings you shall have,
Before you’re summon’d to the grave.
Willing for once I’ll quit my prey,

And grant a kind reprieve ;
In hopes you’ll have no more to say ;
But, when I call again this way,
Well pleas’d the world will leave.”

To these conditions both consented,
And parted perfectly contented.

What next the hero of our tale befell,
How long he liv’d, how wise, how well,
How roundly he pursu’d his course,
And smok’d his pipe, and strok’d his horse,
The willing muse shall tell :

He chaffer’d then, he bought, he sold,
Nor once perceiv’d his growing old,
Nor thought of Death as near ;
His friends not false, his wife no shrew,
Many his gains, his children few,
He pass’d his hours in peace.

But while he view’d his wealth increase,
While thus along Life’s dusty road
The beaten track content he trod,
Old Time, whose haste no mortal spares,
Uncall’d, unheeded, unawares,

Brought on his eightieth year.
And now, one night, in musing mood,
As all alone he fate,

Th' unwelcome messenger of Fate

Once more before him stood.

Half kill'd with anger and surprise,

"So soon return'd !" old Dodson cries.

"So soon, d'ye call it?" Death replies :

"Surely, my friend, you're but in jest !

Since I was here before

'Tis six-and-thirty years at least,

And you are now fourscore."

"So much the worse," the clown rejoin'd ;

"To spare the aged would be kind :

However, see your search be legal ;

And your authority—is 't regal ?

Else you are come on a fool's errand,

With but a secretary's warrant.

Beside, you promis'd me Three Warnings,

Which I have look'd for nights and mornings!

But for that loss of time and ease,

I can recover damages."

"I know," cries Death, "that, at the best,
I seldom am a welcome guest ;

But don't be captious, friend, at least :

I little thought you'd still be able

To stump about your farm and stable ;

Your years have run to a great length ;

I wish you joy, tho', of your strength !"

"Hold," says the farmer, "not so fast !
I have been lame these four years past."

"And no great wonder," Death replies :

"However, you still keep your eyes ;

And sure, to see ones loves and friends,

For legs and arms would make amends."

"Perhaps," says Dodson, "so it might,
But latterly I've lost my sight."

“ This is a shocking tale ’tis true ;
But still there’s comfort left for you :
Each strives your sadness to amuse ;
I warrant you hear all the news.”

“ There’s none,” cries he ; and if there were,
I’m grown so deaf, I could not hear.”

“ Nay, then,” the spectre stern rejoin’d,

“ These are unjustifiable yearnings ;
If you are Lame, and Deaf, and Blind,

You’ve had your Three sufficient Warnings.

So come along, no more we’ll part ;”

He said, and touch’d him with his dart.

And now, old Dodson turning pale,

Yields to his fate—so ends my tale.

THRALE.

SECTION III.

The Hare and many Friends.

FRIENDSHIP, in truth, is but a name,
Unless to few you stint the flame.

The child, whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father’s care.

’Tis thus in friendship ; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

A Hare, who in a civil way,
Complied with every thing, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train,
Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain.
Her care was, never to offend ;
And ev’ry creature was her friend.

As forth she went, at early dawn,
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,

Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies.
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath ;
She hears the near advance of death ;
She doubles to mislead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round ;
Till, fainting in the public way,
Half-dead with fear she gasping lay.

What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the horse appear'd in view !
“ Let me,” says she, your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight ;
To friendship ev'ry burthen's light.”

The horse replied, “ Poor honest pufs !
It grieves my heart to see thee thus :
Be comforted, relief is near ;
For all your friends are in the rear.”

She next the stately bull implor'd ;
And thus replied the mighty lord :
“ Since ev'ry beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.—
To leave you thus might seem unkind ;
But see, the goat is just behind.”

The goat remark'd her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye ;
“ My back,” says he, “ may do you harm ;
The sheep's at hand, and wood is warm.”

The sheep was feeble, and complain'd
His sides a load of wool sustain'd :
Said he was slow, confess'd his fears ;
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.

She now the trotting-calf addrefs'd,
To save from death a friend distress'd.
Shall I," says he, "of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler pass'd you by:
How strong are those! how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine might take offence.
Excuse me, then. You know my heart,
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu!
For, see, the hounds are just in view."

GAY.

SECTION IV.

The Chameleon; or pertinacity exposed.

OF T has it been my lot to mark
A proud conceited talking spark,
With eyes, that hardly serv'd at most
To guard their master 'gainst a post;
Yet round the world the blade has been,
To see whatever could be seen:
Returning from his finish'd tour,
Grows ten times perter than before;
Whatever word you chance to drop,
'The travell'd fool your mouth will stop;
"But, if my judgment you'll allow—
I've seen—and sure I ought to know"—
So begs you'd pay a due submission,
And acquiesce in his decision.

Two travellers of such a cast,
As o'er Arabia's wilds they pass'd,

And on their way, in friendly chat,
 Now talk'd of this, and then of that,
 Discours'd a while, 'mongst other matter,
 Of the Chameleon's form and nature.

"A stranger animal," cries one,
 "Sure never liv'd beneath the sun !

A lizard's body, lean and long,
 A fish's head, a serpent's tongue,
 Its foot with triple claw disjoin'd ;
 And what a length of tail behind !
 How slow its pace ! and then its hue—
 Who ever saw so fine a blue ?"

"Hold there," the other quick replies,
 "'Tis green,—I saw it with these eyes,
 As late with open mouth it lay,
 And warm'd it in the sunny ray ;
 Stretch'd at its ease the beast I view'd,
 And saw it eat the air for food."

"I've seen it, friend, as well as you,
 And must again affirm it blue.
 At leisure I the beast survey'd,
 Extended in the cooling shade."

"'Tis green, 'tis green, I can assure ye."—

"Green !" cries the other in a fury—

"Why do you think, I've lost my eyes ?"

"'Twere no great loss," the friend replies,

"For, if they always serve you thus,
 You'll find them but of little use."

So high at last the contest rose,
 From words they almost came to blows :
 When luckily came by a third—
 To him the question they referr'd ;
 And begg'd he'd tell 'em, if he knew,
 Whether the thing was green or blue.

“ Come,” cries the umpire, “ cease your pother,
The creature’s neither one nor t’ other :
I caught the animal last night,
And view’d it o’er by candle-light :
I mark’d it well—’twas black as jet—
You stare—but I have got it yet,
And can produce it.” “ Pray then do :
For I am sure the thing is blue.”

“ And I’ll engage that when you’ve seen
The reptile, you’ll pronounce him green.”

“ Well then, at once, to ease the doubt,”
Replies the man, “ I’ll turn him out ;
And when before your eyes I’ve set him,
If you don’t find him black, I’ll eat him.”

He said ; then full before their sight
Produc’d the beast, and lo—’twas white !
Both star’d ; the man look’d wondrous wise—
“ My children,” the Chameleon cries,
“ (Then first the creature found a tongue,)
You all are right, and all are wrong :
When next you talk of what you view,
Think others see as well as you ;
Nor wonder, if you find that none
Prefers your eye-sight to his own.”

MERRICK.

SECTION V.

The Hermit.

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a rev’rend Hermit grew ;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well ;

Remote from man, with God he pass'd his days,
Pray'r all his business, all his pleasure praise.

A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd heav'n itself, till one suggestion rose—
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey;
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway:
His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenour of his soul is lost.
So when a smooth expanse receives impress
Calm nature's image on its wat'ry breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answering colours glow
But if a stone the gentle sea divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on ev'ry side,
And glimm'ring fragments of a broken sun;
Banks, trees, and skies, in thick disorder run.

To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books or swains report it right,
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly dew,)
He quits his cell; the pilgrim staff he bore,
And fix'd the scallop in his hat before;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass:
But when the southern sun had warm'd the day,
A youth came posting o'er a crossing way:
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets wav'd his hair:
Then near approaching, "Father, hail!" he cried,
And, "Hail, my son!" the rev'rend sire replied.

Words follow'd words, from question answer flow'd,
And talk of various kind deceiv'd the road ;
Till each with other pleas'd, and loth to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart.
Thus stands an aged elm in ivy bound,
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

Now sunk the sun ; the closing hour of day
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober gray ;
Nature in silence bid the world repose :
When near the road a stately palace rose.
There, by the moon, through ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crown'd the sloping sides of grass.
It chanc'd the noble master of the dome
Still made his house the wand'ring stranger's home ;
Yet still the kindness from a thirst of praise,
Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive : the liv'ried servants wait ;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate,
The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good.
Then, led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.

At length 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day
Along the wide canals the zephyrs play ;
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighbouring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests obedient to the call ;
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall ;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet grac'd,
Which the kind master forc'd the guests to taste.
Then, pleas'd and thankful, from the porch they go ;
And, but the landlord, none had cause of woe :

His cup was vanish'd ; for in secret guise
The younger guest purloin'd the glitt'ring prize.

As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glist'ning and basking in the summer ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear ;
So seem'd the fire, when far upon the road
The shining spoil his wiley partner shew'd.
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask, to part :
Murm'ring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard
That gen'rous actions meet a base reward.

While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds ;
A sound in air presag'd approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warn'd by the signs, the wand'ring pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighb'ring seat.
'Twas built with turrets on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimprov'd around ;
Its owner's temper, tim'rous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caus'd a desert there.
As near the miser's heavy Doors they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew ;
The nimble lightning mix'd with show'rs began,
And o'er their heads loud rolling thunder ran.
Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driv'n by the wind and batter'd by the rain.
At length some pity warm'd the master's breast ;
('Twas then his threshold first receiv'd a guest ;)
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shiv'ring pair.
One frugal fagot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervour through their limbs recalls.

Bread of the coarsest sort, with meager wine,
(Each hardly granted,) serv'd them both to dine:
And when the tempest first appear'd to cease,
A ready warning bid them part in peace.

With still remark the pond'ring Hermit view'd,
In one so rich a life so poor and rude;
And why should such (within himself he cried)
Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside?
But what new marks of wonder soon take place,
In ev'ry settling feature of his face,
When from his vest the young companion bore
That cup the gen'rous landlord own'd before,
And paid profusely with the precious bowl
The stinted kindness of this churlish soul!

But now the clouds in airy tumult fly;
The sun emerging opes an azure sky;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And, glitt'ring as they tremble, cheer the day:
The weather courts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.

While hence they walk, the Pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travail of uncertain thought;
His partner's acts without their cause appear;
'Twas there a vice; and seem'd a madness here:
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.
Now nights' dim shades again involve the sky;
Again the wand'ers want a place to lie:
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh.
The soil improv'd around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great,
It seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content; and not for praise but virtue kind.

Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
 Then bless the mansion, and the master greet.
 Their greeting fair, bestow'd with modest guise,
 The courteous master hears, and thus replies :

“ Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
 To him who gives us all I yield a part ;
 From him you come, for him accept it here,
 A frank and sober more than costly cheer.”
 He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
 Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed ;
 When the grave household round his hall repair,
 Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with prayer.

At length the world, renew'd by calm repose,
 Was strong for toil ; the dappled morn arose ;
 Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
 Near the clos'd cradle where an infant slept,
 And writh'd his neck : the landlord's little pride,
 O strange return ! grew black, and gasp'd, and died.
 Horror of horrors ! what ! his only son !
 How look'd our Hermit when the fact was done !
 Not hell, tho' hell's black jaws in sunder part,
 And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.

Confus'd and struck with silence at the deed,
 He flies ; but, trembling, fails to fly with speed.
 His steps the youth pursues ; the country lay
 Perplex'd with roads ; a servant shew'd the way :
 A river cross'd the path ; the passage o'er
 Was nice to find ; the servant trod before :
 Long arms of oaks an open bridge supplied,
 And deep the waves beneath the bending branches glide.
 The youth, who seem'd to watch a time to sin,
 Approach'd the careless guide, and thrust him in :
 Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head ;
 Then flashing turns, and sinks among the dead.

Wild sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes :
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries ;
“ Detested wretch ! ”—but scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man.
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet ;
His robe turn'd white, and flow'd upon his feet ;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair ;
Celestial odours breathe through purpled air ;
And wings whose colours glitter'd on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.
The form ethereal bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.

Tho' loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gaz'd, and wist not what to do ;
Surprise, in secret chains, his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.
But silence here the beauteous angel broke ;
The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke.

“ Thy pray'r, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne :
These charms success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind ;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky—
Nay, cease to kneel—thy fellow servant I.
Then know the truth of government Divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.
The Maker justly claims that world he made :
In this the right of Providence is laid.
Its sacred majesty through all depends
On using second means to work his ends.
'Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye,
The pow'r exerts his attributes on high ;

Your actions uses, nor controls your will;
 And bids the doubting sons of men be still.
 What strange events can strike with more surprise,
 Than those which lately struck thy wond'ring eyes?
 Yet, taught by these, confess th' Almighty just;
 And, where you can't unriddle, learn to trust.

“The great vain man, who far'd on costly food,
 Whose life was too luxurious to be good;
 Who made his iv'ry stands with goblets shine,
 And forc'd his guests to morning draughts of wine;
 Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
 And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.

“The mean suspicious wretch, whose bolted door
 Ne'er mov'd in pity to the wand'ring poor,
 With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
 That Heav'n can bless, if mortals will be kind.
 Conscious of wanting worth he views the bowl,
 And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
 Thus artists melt the fullen ore of lead,
 With heaping coals of fire upon its head:
 In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
 And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.

“Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
 But now the child half wean'd his heart from God:
 Child of his age, for him he liv'd in pain,
 And measur'd back his steps to earth again.
 To what excesses had his dotage run!
 But God, to save the father, took the son.
 To all but thee in fits he seem'd to go;
 And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow.
 The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
 Now owns in tears the punishment was just.
 But how had all his fortunes felt a wrack,
 Had that false servant sped in safety back.

This night his treasur'd heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail!
Thus Heav'n instructs thy mind: this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign, and sin no more."

On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew;
The sage stood wond'ring as the seraph flew.
Thus look'd Elisha, when, to mount on high,
His master took the chariot of the sky:
The fiery pomp ascending left the view;
The prophet gaz'd, and wish'd to follow too.
The bending Hermit here a pray'r begun:
Lord! as in heav'n, on earth thy will be done.
Then, gladly turning, sought his ancient place;
And pass'd a life of piety and peace.

PARNELL.

CHAPTER II.

DIDACTIC PIECES.

SECTION I.

Wishes obtained often make men miserable.

BEHOLD what danger marks the path
Of high-brow'd Opulence! Intemperance,
The fruitful parent of Disease, behind
Reels loose, and silent plants th' entangling snare.
Oft when, to vengeance rous'd, th' Eternal dooms
Some wretch to misery extreme, he grants
The fervent wish; he gives th' insatiate eye
To rove transported o'er its golden store;
The heart to swell like Xerxes', when he view'd
His hosts that wrapt th' immeasurable plain,
And triumph'd in his pow'r. Thus fares the wretch
As whirl'd by Passion, thro' life's dusty field
He bursts exulting. On the drooping head
Of Merit, shy to censure, and repress
By decent Pride from murmur'ing, his rude hand
Arrests the palm. He gains it: and ador'd
By Folly's wond'ring train, presumptuous shapes
His course; till, like a canker at the root,
That secret riots on the vital stream,
Slow, but sure-wasting Fate in silence takes
Th' inevitable aim; and spares the hand
Of hoary Time, his silver, and his scythe.

O weak ! thro' Passion's erring glass to view
What cooler thought condemns ! Think'st thou the
man

By birth exalted, by the lavish hand
Of fortune crown'd with honour, whose gay hours
Dance to the melting lute's melodious lay,
Is happy?—Know, thy wand'ring search mistakes
The shade for substance. Could thy thought explore
The mind within ; what real ills excite
The mental tumult ; to the trembling gaze
Of Fear what phantoms of imagin'd woes
Swim thro' the dark night's solemn noon, when Sleep
Shakes not her poppies o'er his longing eyes,
That roll in vain ; what inward eating care
Preys on his pamper'd blood ; what wishes wild ;
What dread of future misery ; what dreams
Of horror gleam athwart the fable scroll
Where Mem'ry prints her records : would the scene
Wake thee to envy ? Would thy wishing soul
Pant for the boon that glitters to the eye,
But stings the heart and poisons all its joy ?

I read thy secret doubt :—" 'Tis Guilt that shades
The brow of Grandeur ; 'tis the solemn peal
Of conscience thund'ring in the mental ear,
That wakes to quick sensation. To the dream
Of harmless innocence, no demon shakes
His front terrific : all is calm within,
And tuned to perfect harmony. Yet Peace
May dwell with Opulence ; one happy mind
May eye rejoicing its extended pow'r
To work for man ; exulting as it views
A smiling tribe around, snatch'd from the grasp
Of ruthless want, and basking in the beam
Of joy, to transport kindling, and to love."

'Tis just.—Then noble mind by Fortune rais'd,
 And warm'd by strong benevolence to spread
 Its happiness to all, displays to man
 His Maker's image. To a godlike few
 Heav'n gives at once the virtue and the pow'r.
 Yet plants not Opulence for these a snare,
 That poverty escapes?—The wretch who dragg'd
 His fire relentless to the tomb—say, rose
 No boiling passion in his rankled heart?
 Felt not his tortur'd breast the venom sting
 Of keen impatience? Flam'd not to his eye
 Gold, titles, honour, all the tinsel-show,
 That on the sullen front of Avarice wakes
 A gloomy smile, and bids his little thought
 Receive a gleam of joy? From these secure
 Lives not untutor'd Indigence at ease?
 And steals unseen along the vale of life,
 Calm, peaceful, shelter'd from the stormy blast
 That shakes Ambition's plume; that wrecks the hope,
 The quiet of mankind? What though to these
 The means are scanty?—O'er the roughen'd cheek
 Health sheds her bloom; their sinews knit by toil,
 Robust and Firm, support th' allotted weight;
 And gradual loosed by long revolving years,
 Resign their charge, untainted by the seeds
 Of lurking Death, flow through the form diffus'd
 From meals that Nature nauseates, from the cup
 Where the wine laughs, and on the mantling cheek
 Kindles a transient blush, but works disease,
 And shades the temples with untimely snow.

OGILVIE.

SECTION II.

The golden verses of Pythagoras.

FIRST, the Supreme doth highest rev'rence claim ;
Use with religious awe his sacred name :
Assur'd he views thy ways, let nought controul
The word thou once hast bound upon thy soul.

Next, to the heroes bear a grateful mind,
Whose glorious cares and toils have blest mankind.
Let just respect and decent rites be paid
To the immortal manes of the dead.

Honour thy parents, and thy next of kind ;
And virtuous men wherever thou canst find ;
In the same bond of love let them be join'd. }

Useful and steady let thy life proceed,
Mild ev'ry word, good-natur'd ev'ry deed ;
Oh, never with the man thou lov'st contend :
But bear a thousand frailties from thy friend.
Rashly inflam'd, vain spleen, and slight surmise,
To real feuds, and endless discord rise.

O'er lust, o'er anger, keep the strictest rein,
Subdue thy Sloth, thy appetite restrain.
With no vile action venture to comply,
Tho' unbeheld by ev'ry mortal eye.
Above all witnesses thy conscience fear,
And more than all mankind thyself revere.

One way let all thy words and actions tend,
Reason their constant guide, and truth their end.
And ever mindful of thy mortal state,
How quick, how various are the turns of fate ;

How here, how there, the tides of fortune roll ;
 How soon impending death concludes the whole ;
 Compose thy mind, and, free from anxious strife,
 Endure thy portion of the ills of life :
 Tho' still the good man stands secure from harms,
 Nor can misfortune wound, whom virtue arms.

In common converse, thou wilt often find
 Some to improve, and some to taint the mind ;
 Grateful to that a due observance pay ;
 Beware lest this entice thy thoughts astray ;
 And bold untruths which thou art forc'd to hear,
 Receive discreetly with a patient ear.

Wouldst thou be justly rank'd among the wise,
 Think ere thou do'st, ere thou resolv'st, advise.
 Still let thy aims with sage experience square,
 And plan thy conduct with sagacious care ;
 So shalt thou all thy course with pleasure run,
 Nor wish an action of thy life undone.

Among the various ends of thy desires,
 'Tis no inferior place thy health requires.
 Firmly for this from all excess refrain,
 Thy cups be mod'rate, and thy diet plain :
 Nor yet inelegant thy board supply,
 But shun the nauseous pomp of luxury.
 Let spleen by cheerful converse be withstood,
 And honest labours purify the blood.

Each night, ere needful slumber seals thy eyes,
 Home to thy soul let these reflections rise :
 How has this day my duty seen express'd ?
 What have I done, omitted, or transgress'd ?
 Then grieve the moments thou hast idly spent :
 The rest will yield thee comfort and content.

Be these good rules thy study and delight,
 Practise by day, and ponder them by night ;

Thus all thy thoughts to virtue's height shall rise,
And truth shall stand unveil'd before thy eyes.
Of beings the whole system thou shalt see,
Rang'd as they are in beauteous harmony ;
Whilst all depend from one superior cause,
And nature works obedient to her laws.
Hence, as thou labour'st with judicious care
To run the course allotted to thy share,
Wisdom refulgent with a heav'nly ray
Shall clear thy prospect, and direct thy way.

Then all around compassionately view
The wretched ends which vain mankind pursue,
Toss'd to and fro by each impetuous gust,
The rage of passion, or the fire of lust ;
No certain stay, no safe retreat they know,
But blindly wander through a maze of woe.
Mean while congenial vileness works within,
And custom quite subdues the soul to sin.
Save us from this distress, Almighty Lord,
Our minds illumine, and thy aid afford !

But O ! secure from all thy life is led,
Whose feet the happy paths of virtue tread.
Thou stand'st united to the race divine,
And the perfection of the skies is thine.
Imperial reason, free from all control,
Maintains her just dominion in thy soul :
Till purg'd at length from ev'ry sinful stain,
When friendly death shall break the cumbrous chain,
Loos'd from the body thou shalt take thy flight,
And range immortal in the fields of light.

FITZGERALD.

SECTION III.

Improvement of time recommended.

HE mourns the dead, who lives as they desire.
 Where is that thirst, that avarice of Time,
 (Blest avarice !) which the thought of death inspires ?
 O time ! than gold more sacred ; more a load
 Than lead, to fools ; and fools reputed wise.
 What moment granted man without account ?
 What years are squandered, wisdom's debt unpaid ?
 Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door,
 Insidious Death ; should his strong hand arrest,
 No composition sets the prisoner free.
 Eternity's inexorable chain
 Fast binds ; and vengeance claims the full arrear.

How late I shudder'd on the brink ! how late
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair !
 For what calls thy disease ? for moral aid.
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
 Youth is not rich in time ; it may be, poor :
 Part with it as with money, sparing ; pay
 No moment, but in purchase of its worth :
 And what its worth, ask death-beds, they can tell.
 Part with it as with life, reluctant ; big
 With holy hope of nobler time to come.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain ?
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,
 When vernal suns inspire ? Amusement reigns
 Man's great demand : to trifle is to live :
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?—
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle ?
 Is it not treason to the soul immortal,
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize ?
 Will toys amuse, when med'cines cannot cure ?

When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scene
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight ;
(As lands, and cities with their glitt'ring spires
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there ;)
Will toys amuse?—no: thrones will then be toys,
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time?—its loss we dearly buy.
What pleads Lorenzo for his high priz'd sports ?
He pleads time's num'rous blanks ; he loudly pleads
The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.
From whom those blanks and trifles, but from thee ?
No blank, no trifle, nature made or meant.
Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine :
This cancels thy complaint at once ; this leaves
In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all :
This, the blest art of turning all to gold ;
This, the good heart's prerogative to raise
A royal tribute, from the poorest hours.
Immense revenue ! ev'ry moment pays.
If nothing more than purpose in thy pow'r,
Thy purpose firm, is equal to the deed :
Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly ; angels could no more.
Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint ;
'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer ;
Guard well thy thoughts ; our thoughts are heard in
heav'n.

On all-important time, thro' ev'ry age,
Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd ; the man
Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.
“ I've lost a day ”—the prince who nobly cried,
Had been an emperor without his crown.

He spoke, as if deputed by mankind.
 So should all speak: so reason speaks in all.
 From the soft whispers of that God in man,
 Why fly to folly, why to phrensy fly,
 For rescue from the blessing we possess?
 Time, the supreme!—Time is eternity;
 Pregnant with all eternity can give,
 Pregnant with all that makes arch-angels smile.
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth
 A pow'r etherial, only not ador'd. YOUNG.

SECTION IV.

*The present constitution of things adapted to the nature
 of man.*

WOULDST thou
 New-mould thy Maker's work, reform the plan
 Wrought by unerring Wisdom? Wouldst thou claim,
 Weak, frail, and guilty as thou art, for thee
 A paradise prepar'd? A clime, that knows
 No storm, th' abode of man, whose passions break
 The bounds of right; who triumphs in the eye
 Of Heav'n, to launch insulting on the stream
 Of folly; who contemns th' Eternal's law;
 Who to his Maker says, Depart, for thee
 I know no, nor desire! Say, dost thou spread
 The lawn for wolves, or bid the villa rise,
 To sooth the lion's horrid heart, that throbs
 Exulting o'er its prey? Nor think the charge
 Too harsh; for to Eternal Wisdom, man
 Deform'd by passion, is a monster, wild
 As that which roams the Lybian wastes; and joys
 To drench his tusks in blood. Mark then the clime,
 As temper'd to th' inhabitant. Behold

Thy mind, the mirror, where th' alternate change
Of calm and tempest shifting quick, reflects
The varying forms of nature ! kindling now
To rage, now boiling like the troubled sea,
Work'd by a whirlwind ; mad'ning like the wave
That strikes its shaggy mound ; or secret arm'd
With triple poison, as the gale that breathes
Thro' the dark air its brimstone-dropping wing,
And inly-wasting, withers as it flies.

Yet still presumptuous, think'st thou that the pow'r
Who form'd the world, might suit to happier climes
The human frame ; and harmonize the mind
To perfect concord, as the master tunes
The chords melodious of the warbling lyre,
To pour the stream of music ! Know the thought
Of that tremendous Sire, whose awful ken
Involves the vast of nature, ere this orb
Was rent from chaos, in wide reach dispos'd
The mighty chain of things. The piercing glance
Of Wisdom mark'd their natures, and display'd
In gradual rank, the fair ascending scale
Of beauty's rising tribes. Imperfect all,
As from the finite, length unmeasur'd runs
To reach the infinite. Yet in the chain
Each link maintains its use ; each part receives
Proportion'd worth, and ev'ry movement rolls
To work its proper end. What lies above
Thyself, is veil'd from mortal ken ; below,
What tow'rs to thee is open. Cast thine eye
On lifeless matter. Mark th' ascending forms
Of beauty, varying from the bleeding bells
Of yonder amaranth that sweeps the ground,
To the tall cedar, on the topmost spire
Of Lebanon, that rears its head sublime,

And spread its boughs to heav'n. See in the tribe
 Of living forms, the gradual scale ascend
 From sensitive to animal ; from brute
 To human. The fine plant, that from thy touch
 Shrinks sensible, connects the filmy line
 To the small shell but just impregn'd with life,
 Where shut from harm as in a circling mound,
 Lives the lone habitant. Thence rising flow
 Thro' Instinct's wide-revolving rounds, ascends
 The just progression ; till the watchful dog,
 Sagacious, friendly, penetrating, joins
 His twilight circle to his master's sphere,
 Where full-form'd instinct drops, and reason dawns.

If thusthro' nature's wide extent the forms
 Below thee vary, yet th' ascent in all
 By slow gradation rises ; think'st thou then
 That wisdom in her higher works observes
 No similar proportion ? From the ranks
 Below, exalt thy wond'ring gaze. Behold
 The worlds that round yon central sun revolve
 Harmonious ! Each receives its just degree
 Of genial warmth, when near the fiery orb
 It drinks his purest radiance as it wheels ;
 Or sweeps in wider range, like thy fair star
 Aurora ! fann'd with cooler gales, that lies
 In tempered air : or distant, knows
 The change of seasons, as the earth that feels
 The piercing blast of winter : or remote,
 On nature's utmost verge all-darksome rolls,
 And sees the pale sun light the lunar lamps ;
 Or chilling freezes in his noon-day blaze.
 Each in the separate sphere maintains its place ;
 Each keeps its rank in the progressive scale ;
 To each impartial thought assigns its bound :

And Wisdom, plucking from the tree of life
A bough that breathes ambrosia, balm, and myrrh,
Bathes the rich fruitage in the Stygian wave
That soils its bloom ; then o'er her work extends
The dropping branch, and says, " O world, be here
Thy share of good and ill !" Such from the birth
Of time th' Almighty spoke his great decree.

Wouldst thou then, for thy single good dissolve
Th' unbounded harmony of all ? Dost thou
Repine that Heav'n regardless of thy call
Ordains not earth an Eden, nor exalts
The man to angel ? O th' insatiate grasp
Of human hope ! a copious show'r extends
The swelling river o'er its bed ; the sea,
Big with the rushing tides might burst its mound ;
The creeping rill from deeper urns supplied,
May rise an ocean : but the pride of man
Extends to infinite. With all around
Displeas'd, on Fancy's neck he drops the rein.
She, loose and kindling, whirls him on her wing.
He mounts the vault of stars ; he grasps the bolt
Of Heav'n's Eternal ; on empyreal air
He fails : she leaves him : down the pigmy falls,
A worm of earth, and crawls along the ground,
Giddy ; the sport of reptiles, and their prey !

CGILVIE.

SECTION V.

The love of the world detected.

Thus says the prophet of the turk :
Good Mussulman, abstain from pork ;
There is a part in ev'ry swine
No friend or follower of mine

May taste, whate'er his inclination,
 On pain of excommunication.
 Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,
 And thus he left the point at large.
 Had he the sinful part express'd,
 They might with safety eat the rest:
 But for one peice they thought it hard
 From the whole hog to be debarr'd;
 And set their wit at work to find
 What joint the prophet had in mind.
 Much controversy straight arose:
 These choose the back, the belly those;
 By some 'tis confidently said
 He meant not to forbid the head;
 While others at that doctrine rail,
 And piously prefer the tail.
 Thus, conscience freed from ev'ry clog,
 Mahometans eat up the hog.

You laugh—'tis well—the tale applied
 May make you laugh on t' other side.
 "Renounce the world," the preacher cries:
 "We do," a multitude replies.
 While one as innocent regards
 A snug and friendly game at cards;
 And one, whatever you may say,
 Can see no evil in a play;
 Some love a concert or a race,
 And others, shooting and the chase.
 Revil'd and lov'd, renounc'd and follow'd,
 Thus bit by bit the world is swallow'd;
 Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
 Yet likes a slice as well as he:
 With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,
 Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

COWPER.

SECTION VI.

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

PRECEPT divine ! to earth in mercy giv'n ;
O sacred rule of action, worthy Heav'n !
Whose pitying love ordain'd the blest command,
To bind our nature in a firmer band ;
Enforce each human suff'rer's strong appeal,
And teach the selfish breast what others feel ;
Wert thou the guide of life, mankind might know
A soft exemption from the worst of woe.
No more the pow'rful would the weak oppress,
But tyrants learn the luxury to bless.
No more would slav'ry bind a hopeless train
Of human victims in her galling chain.
Mercy the hard, the cruel heart would move
To soften mis'ry by the deeds of love ;
And Av'rice from his hoarded treasures give,
Unask'd, the lib'ral boon, that Want might live !
The impious tongue of Falsehood then would cease
To blast, with dark suggestions, Virtue's peace.
No more would Spleen or Passion banish rest,
And plant a pang in fond Affection's breast ;
By one harsh word, one alter'd look, destroy
Her peace, and wither ev'ry op'ning joy :
Scarce can her tongue the captious wrong explain,
The slight offence which gives so deep a pain !
Th' affected ease that slights her starting tear,
The words whose coldness kills from lips so dear ;—
The hand she loves, alone can point the dart,
Whose hidden sting could wound no other heart—
These, of all pains the sharpest we endure,
The breast which now inflicts, would spring to cure.—

No more deserted genius then would fly
 To breathe in solitude his hopeless sigh ;
 No more would Fortune's partial smile debase
 The spirit, rich in intellectual grace ;
 Who views unmov'd from scenes where pleasures
 bloom,
 The flame of genius sunk in mis'ry's gloom ;
 The soul heav'n form'd to soar, by want oppress'd,
 Nor heeds the wrongs that pierce a kindred breast.
 Thou righteous law, whose clear and useful light
 Sheds on the mind a ray divinely bright ;
 Condensing in one rule whate'er the sage
 Has proudly taught, in many a labour'd page ;
 Bid every heart thy hallow'd voice revere,
 To justice sacred, and to nature dear ! WILLIAMS.

SECTION VII.

The prosperity of vice no just objection to the wisdom of Providence.

Ah ! why, thy thought demands, when virtue feels
 Thy yoke, severe Adversity ! why reigns
 Triumphant Vice, nor dreads th' avenging doom
 Of Heav'n ; but, wanton in the spoils of pow'r,
 Sports in gay frolic down the tide of time,
 Nor dreams of future woe ?—Is he then blest
 Alone, who riots in the feast ; who sails
 Loose in the robe of luxury, and bears
 His front to heav'n, as if his mind defied
 Its frown ?—Ah blind to reason ! whose weak thought
 Sees not, the just severity that saves
 The good, reclaims not error. To persist
 Firm in the path of right, when all within
 Is calm ; or wand'ring from its side, to start,

Alarm'd in time by some awak'ning voice,
And turn, is easy:—but the man whose step
Far thro' the devious waste has wander'd wild,
Regains not, seeks not to regain the path
Longlost ; his course by perseverance form'd,
His doubts by habit reconcil'd. What once
He wish'd now self-deceiv'd, his willing mind
Receives as substance ; and the phantom mocks
With empty smiles his void embrace no more.

Repines then mutt'ring thy presumptuous tongue,
That Heav'n's suspended wrath allows the wretch
An hour to triumph ? that the God who counts
His number'd years a moment, at thy call
Points not his thunder to the guilty head ;
Nor bids his light'nings flash ? Know, if the good
Thro' life should suffer ; in that scanty span
Are all his woes compris'd :—if Vice exults,
That span contains its happiness. Should he,
Who pitying snatches from Temptation's snare
The just, as him whom yon devouring wave
Has mantled ; should his justice thus have claim'd
The wretch yet reeking from his brother's blood,
An instant victim : as the one enjoys
The prize of virtue, and no deep'ning stain
Sullied his life ; the other in the gulf
Of black perdition must have wak'd ; no time
For mercy left ; for penitence, for pray'r,
For pardon, none ; his crimes yet unatton'd
From Heav'n demanding vengeance. But the hand
Of Goodness spares him, that repentant tears
May ease the feeling heart, and Justice drop
Her claim ; or, still relentless, that the stroke
May fall, when his full cup o'erflows with ill.

SECTION VIII.

No age or condition exempt from the power of death.

LIKE other tyrants, Death delights to smite,
 What smitten most proclaims the pride of pow'r,
 And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,
 To bid the wretch survive the fortunate ;
 The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud ;
 And weeping fathers build their children's tomb ;
 Me thine, Narcissa !—what tho' short thy date ?
 Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures :
 That life is long, which answers life's great end :
 The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name :
 The man of wisdom is the man of years.
 In hoary youth Methuselems may die,—
 O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs !
 All more than common menaces an end :
 A blaze betokens brevity of life.
 To plant the soul on her eternal guard,
 In awful expectation of our end,
 Thus runs Death's dread commission ; “ Strike, but so
 As most alarms the living by the dead.”
 Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,
 And cruel sport with man's securities.
 Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim,
 And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep !
 Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
 In deep dissimulation's darkest night.
 Like princes unconfest in foreign courts,
 Who travel under cover, Death assumes
 The name and look of life, and dwells among us.
 Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,

Or ambush in a smile ; or wanton dive
In dimples deep ; love's eddies, which draw in
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.
Most happy they whom least his arts deceive !
One eye on death, and one full fix'd on Heav'n,
Becomes a mortal, and immortal man.

Where is not death ? sure as night follows day,
Death treads in pleasure's footsteps round the world,
When pleasure treads the paths which reason shuns ;
When, against reason riot shuts the door,
And gaiety supplies the place of sense.
Then foremost at the banquet and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die ;
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,
Inly he laughs, to see them laugh at him,
As absent far : and when the revel burns,
When fear is banish'd, and triumphant thought
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,
Against him turns the key ; and bids him sup
With their progenitors—he drops his mask,
Frowns out at full : they start, despair, expire !
Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,
From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire,
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And more than simple conquest in the fiend ?

And now, gay trifler, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commission'd to destroy ?
In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.
Is death uncertain ? therefore thou be fix'd ;

Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,
 All expectation of the coming foe.
 Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,
 Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
 And fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;
 Thus give each day the merit, and renown,
 Of dying well; tho' doom'd but once to die.
 Nor let life's period hidden (as from most)
 Hide too from thee, the precious use of life.

Does wealth with youth and gaiety conspire
 To weave a triple wreath of happiness?
 That shining mark invites the tyrant's spear;
 As if to damp our elevated aims,
 And strongly preach humility to man.
 O how portentous is prosperity!
 How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!
 Few years but yield us proof of death's ambition
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
 And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
 With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss;
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
 The gaudy centre of the public eye;
 When fortune, thus, has toss'd her child in air,
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,
 How often have I seen him dropp'd at once,
 Our morning's envy, and our ev'ning's sigh!
 As her bounties were the signal giv'n,
 The flow'ry wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
 And call death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

YOUNG.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIPTIVE PIECES.

SECTION I.

The Spring.

LO ! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
 Fair Venus' train, appear :
 Disclose the long-expected flow'rs,
 And wake the purple year !
 The Attic warbler pours her throat,
 Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
 The untaught harmony of Spring ;
 While, whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,
 Cool zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
 Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
 A broader, browner shade ;
 Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
 O'ercanopies the glade ;
 Beside some water's rushy brink
 With me the Muse shall sit and think
 (At ease reclin'd in rustic state)
 How vain the ardour of the crowd,
 How low, how little are the proud.
 How indigent the great !

Still is the the toiling hand of care ;
 The panting herds repose ;
 Yet, hark, how thro' the peopled air
 The busy murmur glows !
 The insect youth are on the wing,
 Eager to taste the honey'd spring,
 And float amid the liquid noon :
 Some lightly o'er the current skim,
 Some show their gaily-gilded trim
 Quick-glancing to the sun.

To contemplation's sober eye
 Such is the race of man ;
 And they that creep, and they that fly,
 Shall end where they began.
 Alike the busy and the gay
 But flutter thro' life's little day,
 In fortune's varying colours drest ;
 Brush'd by the hand of rough mischance,
 Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
 They leave, in dust to rest.

GRAY.

SECTION II.

Description of Winter at Copenhagen.

From frozen climes, and endless tracts of snow,
 From streams that northern winds forbid to flow,
 What present shall the Muse to Dorset bring,
 Or how, so near the Pole, attempt to sing?
 The hoary winter here conceals from sight
 All pleasing objects that to verse invite.
 The hills and dales, and the delightful woods,
 The flow'ry plains, and silver-streaming floods,

By snow-disguis'd, in bright confusion lie,
And with one dazzling waste fatigue the eye.

No gentle breathing breeze prepares the spring,
No birds within the desert region sing.

The ships, unmov'd, the boist'rous winds defy,
While rattling chariots o'er the ocean fly.

The vast leviathan wants room to play,
And spout his waters in the face of day.

The starving wolves along the main sea prowl,
And to the moon in icy valleys howl.

For many a shining league the level main
Here spreads itself into a glassy plain :

There solid billows, of enormous size,
Alps of green ice, in wild disorder rise.

And yet but lately have I seen, e'en here,
The winter in a lovely dress appear.

Ere yet the clouds let fall the treasur'd snow,
Or winds began thro' hazy skies to blow,

At ev'ning a keen eastern breeze arose ;
And the descending rain un sullied froze.

Soon as the silent shades of night withdrew,
The ruddy morn disclos'd at once to view

The face of nature in a rich disguise,
And brighten'd ev'ry object to my eyes :

For ev'ry shrub, and ev'ry blade of grass,
And ev'ry pointed thorn, seem'd wrought in glass.

In pearls and rubies rich the hawthorns show,
While thro' the ice the crimson berries glow.

The thick-sprung reeds the wat'ry marshes yield
Seem polish'd lances in a hostile field.

The stag, in limpid currents, with surprise
Sees crystal branches on his forehead rise.

The spreading oak, the beech, and tow'ring pine,
 Glaz'd over, in the freezing ether shine.
 The frighted birds the rattling branches shun,
 That wave and glitter in the distant sun.
 When, if a sudden gust of wind arise,
 The brittle forest into atoms flies ;
 The crackling wood beneath the tempest bends,
 And in a spangled show'r the prospect ends ;
 Or, if a southern gale the region warm,
 And by degrees unbind the wint'ry charm,
 The traveller a miry country sees,
 And journeys sad beneath the dropping trees.

Like some deluded peasant Merlin leads
 Thro' fragrant bow'rs, and thro' delicious meads ;
 While here enchanting gardens to him rise,
 And airy fabrics there attract his eyes,
 His wand'ring feet the magic paths pursue ;
 And, while he thinks the fair illusion true,
 The trackless scenes disperse in fluid air,
 And woods, and wilds, and thorny ways appear :
 A tedious road the weary wretch returns,
 And, as he goes, the transient vision mourns.

PHILLIPS.

SECTION III.

Night described.

Now came still ev'ning on, and twilight gray
 Had, in her sober liv'ry, all things clad.
 Silence accompanied ; for beasts and birds,
 Those to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were flunk ; all but the wakeful nightingale.
 She all night long her plaintive descant sung.
 Silence was pleas'd. Now glow'd the firmament
 With living sapphires. Hesperus, that led

The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light;
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw. MILTON.

Night, fable power ! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.
Silence, how dead, and darkness, how profound !
Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds :
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause,
An awful pause ! prophetic of her end. YOUNG.

SECTION IV.

Grongar Hill.

SILENT Nymph ! with curious eye,
Who, the purple eve, dost lie
On the mountain's lonely van,
Beyond the noise of busy man,
Painting fair the form of things,
While the yellow linnet sings ;
Or the tuneful nightingale
Charms the forest with her tale ;
Come, with all thy various hues,
Come, and aid thy sister-Muse.
Now, while Phœbus riding high,
Gives lustre to the land and sky,
Grongar Hill invites my song,
Draw the landscape bright and strong ;

Grongar! in whose mossy cells,
 Sweetly musing quiet dwells;
 Grongar! in whose silent shade,
 For the modest Muses made,
 So oft I have, the ev'ning still,
 At the fountain of a rill,
 Sat upon a flow'ry bed,
 With my hand beneath my head,
 While stray'd my eyes o'er Towy's flood,
 Over mead and over wood,
 From house to house, from hill to hill,
 Till contemplation had her fill.

About his chequer'd sides I wind,
 And leave his brooks and meads behind;
 And groves and grottos, where I lay,
 And vistas shooting beams of day.
 Wide and wider spreads the vale,
 As circles on a smooth canal:
 The mountains round, unhappy fate,
 Sooner or later, of all height!
 Withdraw their summits from the skies,
 And lessen as the others rise.
 Still the prospect wider spreads,
 Adds a thousand woods and meads;
 Still it widens, widens still,
 And sinks the newly-risen hill.

Now I gain the mountain's brow;
 What a landscape lies below!
 No clouds, no vapours, intervene;
 But the gay, the open scene
 Does the face of nature show
 In all the hues of heav'n's bow;
 And, swelling to embrace the light,
 Spreads around beneath the sight.

Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly tow'ring in the skies ;
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires :
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow-mountain heads,
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks.
Below me trees unnumber'd rise,
Beautiful in various dyes :
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beech, the sable yew ;
The slender fir that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad spread boughs :
And, beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of virtue, peace, and love !
Gaudy as the op'ning dawn,
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wand'ring eye.
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood ;
His sides are cloth'd with waving wood ;
And ancient tow'rs crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below ;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps.
So both a safety from the wind,
In mutual dependence, find.

'Tis now the raven's bleak abode,
'Tis now th' apartment of the toad ;
And there the fox securely feeds,
And there the pois'nous adder breeds }
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds ;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.

Yet time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile complete,
Big with the vanity of state :
But transient is the smile of fate !
A little rule, a little sway,
A sun-beam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have,
Between the cradle and the grave.

}

And see the rivers, how they run
Thro' woods and meads, in shade and sun !
Sometimes swift, sometimes flow,
Wave succeeding wave, they go
A various journey to the deep,
Like human life to endless sleep.
Thus is nature's vesture wrought,
To instruct our wand'ring thought ;
Thus she dresses green and gay,
To disperse our cares away.

Ever charming, ever new,
When will the landscape tire the view ?
The fountains fall, the river's flow,
The woody vallies, warm and low ;
The windy summit, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky ;
The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tow'r,
The naked rock, the shady bow'r ;
The town and village, dome and farm,
Each give each a double charm,
As pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.

}

See on the mountain's southern side;
Where the prospect opens wide,
Where the evening gilds the tide,

}

How close and small the hedges lie !
What streaks of meadows cross the eye ;
A step, methinks, may pass the stream,
So little distant dangers seem :
So we mistake the future's face,
Ey'd through hope's deluding glass,
As yon summits soft and fair,
Clad in colours of the air,
Which, to those who journey near,
Barren, brown, and rough appear :
Still we tread the same coarse way ;
The present's still a cloudy day.

O may I with myself agree,
And never covet what I see !
Content me with a humble shade,
My passions tam'd, my wishes laid ;
For while our wishes wildly roll,
We banish quiet from the soul :
'Tis thus the busy beat the air,
And misers gather wealth and care.

Now, e'en now, my joys run high,
As on the mountain turf I lie ;
While the wanton Zephyr sings,
And in the vale perfumes his wings :
While the waters murmur deep ;
While the shepherd charms his sheep ;
While the birds unbounded fly,
And with music fill the sky,
Now, e'en now, my joys run high.

Be full, ye courts ! be great who will ;
Search for peace with all your skill ;
Open wide the the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor :

In vain ye search, she is not there ;
In vain ye search the domes of care !
Grass and flowers quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain-heads,
Along with pleasure close allied,
Ever by each other's side ;
And often, by the murm'ring rill,
Hears the thrush, while all is still,
Within the groves of Grongar Hill.

}

DYER.

SECTION V.

Description of a parish poor-house.

BEHOLD yon house that holds the parish poor,
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door !
There, where the putrid vapours flagging play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful thro' the day :
There children dwell who know no parents' care ;
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there ;
Heart-broken matrons on their joyless bed,
Forfaken wives, and mothers never wed ;
Dejected widows with unheeded tears,
And crippled age with more than childhood fears ;
The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they !
The moping idiot, and the madman gay.

Here too the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve :
Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,
Mix'd with the clamours of the crowd below ;
Here sorrowing they each kindred sorrow scan,
And the cold charities of man to man :
Whose laws indeed for ruin'd age provide,
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride :

But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,
And pride embitters what it can't deny.

Say ye, oppress'd by some fantastic woes,
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose ;
Who presses the downy couch, while slaves advance
With timid eye, to read the distant glance ;
Who with sad pray'rs the weary doctor tease
To name the nameless ever-new disease ;
Who with mock-patience dire complaints endure,
Which real pain, and that alone, can cure ;
How would you bear in real pain to lie,
Despis'd, neglected, left alone to die ?
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death ?

Such is that room which one rude beam divides,
And naked rafters form the sloping sides :
Where the vile bands that bind the thatch are seen,
And lath and mud are all that lie between ;
Save one dull pane, that coarsely patch'd, gives way
To the rude tempest, yet excludes the day :
Here, on a matted flock, with dust o'erspread,
The drooping wretch reclines his languid head.
For him no hand the cordial cup applies,
Nor wipes the tear that stagnates in his eyes ;
No friends with soft discourse his pain beguile,
Nor promise hope till sickness wears a smile. CRABBE.

SECTION VI.

A Summer Evening's Meditation.

" One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine." Young.
'Tis past ! the sultry tyrant of the south
Has spent his short-liv'd rage. More grateful hours
Move silent on. The skies no more repel
The dazzled sight ; but, with mild maiden beams

Of temper'd light, invite the cherish'd eye
 To wander o'er their sphere: where, hung aloft,
 Dian's bright crescent, like a silver bow
 New strung in heav'n, lifts high its beamy horns,
 Impatient for the night, and seems to push
 Her brother down the sky. Fair Venus shines
 Ev'n in the eye of day; with sweetest beam
 Propitious shines, and shakes a trembling flood
 Of soften'd radiance from her dewy locks.
 The shadows spread apace; while meeken'd eve,
 Her cheek yet warm with blushes, slow retires
 Thro' the Hesperian gardens of the west,
 And shuts the gates of day. 'Tis now the hour
 When Contemplation, from her sunless haunts,
 The cool damp grotto, or the lonely depth
 Of unpierc'd woods, where, wrapt in silent shade,
 She mus'd away the gaudy hours of noon,
 And fed on thoughts unripen'd by the sun,
 Moves forward; and with radiant finger points
 To yon blue concave, swell'd by breath divine,
 Where, one by one, the living eyes of heav'n
 Awake, quick kindling o'er the face of ether
 One boundless blaze; ten thousand trembling fires,
 And dancing lustres, where th' unsteady eye,
 Restless and dazzled, wanders unconfin'd
 O'er all this field of glories; spacious field,
 And worthy of the Master! he whose hand,
 With hieroglyphics elder than the Nile,
 Inscrib'd the mystic tablet, hung on high
 To public gaze; and said, Adore, O man,
 The finger of thy God! From what pure wells
 Of milky light, what soft o'erflowing urn,
 Are all these lamps so fill'd? these friendly lamps,
 For ever streaming o'er the azure deep

To point our path, and light us to our home.
How soft they slide among their lucid spheres!
And, silent as the foot of time, fulfil
Their destin'd courses. Nature's self is hush'd,
And, but a scatter'd leaf, which rustles thro'
The thick-wove foliage, not a sound is heard
To break the midnight air; thro' the rais'd ear,
Intensely list'ning, drinks in ev'ry breath.
How deep the silence, yet how loud the praise!
But are they silent all? or is there not
A tongue in ev'ry star that talks with man,
And woos him to be wife? nor woos in vain:
This dead of midnight is the noon of thought,
And wisdom mounts her zenith with the stars.
At this still hour the self-collected soul
Turns inward, and beholds a stranger there
Of high descent, and more than mortal rank;
An embryo God; a spark of fire divine,
Which must burn on for ages, when the sun
(Fair transitory creature of a day!)
Has clos'd his golden eye, and, wrapt in shades,
Forgets his wonted journey thro' the east.

Ye citadels of light, and seats of bliss!

Perhaps my future home, from whence the soul,
Revolving periods past, may oft look back,
With recollected tendernefs, on all
The various busy scenes she left below,
Its deep-laid projects, and its strange events,
As on some fond and doting tale that sooth'd
Her infant hours.—O be it lawful now
To tread the hallow'd circle of your courts,
And, with mute wonder and delighted awe,
Approach your burning confines!—Seiz'd in thought,
On fancy's wild and roving wing I sail

From the green borders of the peopled earth,
 And the pale moon, her duteous fair attendant ;
 From solitary Mars ; from the vast orb
 Of Jupiter, whose huge gigantic bulk
 Dances in ether like the lightest leaf ;
 To the dim verge, the suburbs of the system,
 Where cheerless Saturn, 'midst his wat'ry moons,
 Girt with a lucid zone, in gloomy pomp,
 Sits like an exil'd monarch. Fearless thence
 I launch into the trackless deeps of space,
 Where burning round, ten thousand suns appear,
 Of elder beam ; which ask no leave to shine
 Of our terrestrial star, nor borrow light
 From the proud regent of our scanty day :
 Sons of the morning, first-born of creation,
 And only less than him who marks their track,
 And guides their fiery wheels. Here must I stop,
 Or is there aught beyond ? What hand unseen
 Impels me onward, thro' the glowing orbs
 Of habitable nature, far remote,
 To the dread confines of eternal night,
 To solitudes of vast unpeopled space,
 The deserts of creation, wide and wild,
 Where embryo systems and unkindled suns
 Sleep in the womb of chaos ? Fancy droops,
 And thought astonish'd stops her bold career.
 But, oh, thou mighty MIND ! whose pow'rful word
 Said, Thus let all things be, and thus they were,
 Where shall I seek thy presence ? how, unblam'd,
 Invoke thy dread perfection ?——
 Have the broad eye-lids of the morn beheld thee ?
 Or does the beamy shoulder of Orion
 Support thy throne ? O look with pity down
 On erring, guilty man ! not in thy names

Of terror clad ; not with those thunders arm'd
 That conscious Sinia felt, when fear appall'd
 The scatter'd tribes ; thou hast a gentler voice,
 That whispers comfort to the swelling heart,
 Abash'd, yet longing to behold her Maker.

But now my soul, unus'd to stretch her pow'rs
 In flight so daring, drops her weary wing,
 And seeks again the known accustom'd spot,
 Drest up with sun, and shade, and lawns, and streams ;
 A mansion fair and spacious for its guest,
 And full replete with wonders. Let me here,
 Content and grateful, wait th' appointed time,
 And ripen for the skies : the hour will come
 When all these splendours bursting on my sight
 Shall stand unveil'd, and to my ravish'd sense
 Unlock the glories of the world unknown.

BARBAULD.

SECTION VII.

Cheerfulness.

FAIR at the dawning light ! auspicious guest !
 Source of all comfort to the human breast !
 Depriv'd of thee, in sad despair we moan,
 And tedious roll the heavy moments on.
 Though beauteous objects all around us rise,
 To charm the fancy and delight the eyes ;
 Tho' art's fair works and nature's gifts conspire
 To please each sense, and satiate each desire,
 'Tis joyless all—till thy enliv'ning ray
 Scatters the melancholy gloom away.
 Then opens to the soul a heav'nly scene,
 Gladness and peace, all sprightly, all serene.

Where dost thou deign, say, in what blest retreat,
 To choose thy mansion, and to fix thy seat ?

Thy sacred presence how shall we explore?
 Can avarice gain thee with her golden store?
 Can vain ambition, with her boasted charms,
 Tempt thee within her wide-extended arms?
 No, with Content alone canst thou abide,
 Thy sister, ever smiling by thy side.

When boon companions void of ev'ry care
 Crown the full bowl, and the rich banquet share,
 And give a loose to pleasure—art thou there?
 Or when th' assembled great and fair advance
 To celebrate the mask, the play, the dance,
 Whilst beauty spreads its sweetest charms around,
 And airs extatic swell their tuneful sound,
 Art thou within the pompous circle found?
 Does not thy influence more sedately shine?
 Can such tumultuous joys as these be thine?
 Surely more mild, more constant in their course,
 Thy pleasures issue from a nobler source;
 From sweet discretion ruling in the breast,
 From passions temper'd, and from lusts repress;
 From thoughts unconscious of a guilty smart,
 And the calm transports of an honest heart.

Thy aid, O ever faithful, ever kind!
 Thro' life, thro' death, attends the virtuous mind;
 Of angry fate wards from us ev'ry blow,
 Cures ev'ry ill, and softens ev'ry woe.
 Whatever good our mortal state desires,
 What wisdom finds, or innocence inspires;
 From nature's bounteous hand whatever flows,
 Whate'er our Maker's providence bestows,
 By thee mankind enjoys; by thee repays
 A grateful tribute of perpetual praise. FITZGERALD.

SECTION VIII.

Providence.

Lo ! now the ways of heav'n's eternal King
To man are open !
Review them and adore ! Hear the loud voice
Of Wisdom founding in her works !—" Attend,
Ye sons of men ! ye children of the dust,
Be wise ! Lo ! I was present, when the Sire
Of heav'n pronounc'd his fiat ; when his eye
Glanc'd thro' the gulf of darkness, and his hand
Fashion'd the rising universe :—I saw,
O'er the fair lawns, the heaving mountains raise
Their pine-clad spires ; and down the shaggy cliff
I gave the rill to murmur. The rough mounds
That bound the madd'ning deep ; the storm that roars
Along the desert ; the volcano fraught
With burning brimstone :—I prescribe their ends.
I rule the rushing winds, and, on their wings
Triumphant, walk the tempest.—To my call
Obsequious bellows the red bolt, that tears
The cloud's thin mantle, when the gushing show'r
Descending copious bids the desert bloom."

" I gave to man's dark search superior light ;
And clear'd dim Reason's misty view, to mark
His pow'rs, as through revolving ages tried,
They rose not to his Maker. Thus prepar'd
To know how distant from his narrow ken
The truths by heav'n reveal'd, my hand display'd
The plan fair-opening, where each nobler view,
That swells th' expanding heart ; each glorious hope,
That points ambition to its goal ; each aim,

That stirs, exalts, and animates desire ;
Pours on the mind's rapt sight a noon-tide ray."

" Nor less in life employ'd, 'tis mine to raise
The desolate of heart ; to bend the brow
Of stubborn pride, to bid reluctant ire
Subside ; to tame rude nature to the rein
Of virtue. What tho', screen'd from mortal view,
I walk the deep'ning gloom? What tho' my ways,
Remote from thought's bewilder'd search, are wrapt
In trip e darkness?—Yet I work the springs
Of life, and to the gen'ral good direct
Th' obsequious means to move.—O ye, who tofs'd
On life's tumultuous ocean, eye the shore,
Yet far remov'd ; and with the happy hour,
When slumber on her downy couch shall lull
Your cares to sweet repose ; yet bear awhile,
And I will guide you to the balmy climes
Of rest ; will lay you by the silver stream
Crown'd with elysian bow'rs, where peace extends
Her blooming olive, and the tempest pours
Its killing blast no more." Thus Wisdom speaks
To man ; thus calls him thro' the external form
Of nature, thro' Religion's fuller noon,
Thro' life's bewild'ring mazes ; to observe
A PROVIDENCE IN ALL.

OGILVIE.

SECTION. IX.

The Last Day.

AT the destin'd hour,
By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
See, all the formidable sons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play

Their various engines ; all at once disgorge
Their blazing magazines ; and take by storm
This poor terrestrial citadel of man.

Amazing period ! when each mountain-height
Out-burns Vesuvius ; rocks eternal pour
Their melted mafs, as rivers once they pour'd ;
Stars rush ; and final ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation !—while aloft
More than astonishment ! if more can be !
Far other firmament than e'er was seen,
Than e'er was thought by man ! Far other stars !
Stars animate, that govern these of fire ;
Far other sun !—A sun, O how unlike
The babe at Bethlehem ! How unlike the man
That groan'd on Calvary !—Yet HE it is ;
That man of sorrows ! O how chang'd ! what pomp !
In grandeur terrible, all heav'n descends :
A swift archangel with his golden wings,
As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace
The scene Divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
And now, all dross remov'd, heav'n's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our ether, flames.
While, (dreadful contrast !) far, how far beneath !
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas,
And storms sulphureous : her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,
And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams,
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more !
The day is broke, which never more shall close !
Above, around, beneath, amazement all !
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire !
All nature struggling in the pangs of death !

Dost thou not hear her ? dost thou not deplore
Her strong convulsions, and her final groan ?
Where are we now ? Ah me ! the ground is gone
On which we stood ! Lorenzo ! while thou mayst,
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever !
Where ? how ? from whence ? vain hope ! it is too late !
Where ! where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,
When consternation turns the good man pale ?

Great day ! for which all other days were made ;
For which earth rose from chaos ; man from earth ;
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Descended on poor earth-created man !
Great day of dread, decision and despair !
At thought of thee, each sublunary wish
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world ;
And catches at each reed of hope in heav'n.
Already is begun the grand assize,
In us, in all : deputed conscience scales
The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom ;
Forestalls ; and, by forstalling, proves it sure.
Why on himself should man void judgment pass ?
Is idle nature laughing at her sons ?
Who conscience sent, her sentence will support,
And God above assert that God in man.
Thrice happy they, that enter now the court
Heav'n opens in their bosoms : but how rare !
Ah me ! that magnanimity, how rare !
What hero, like the man who stands himself ?
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone ;
Who hears intrepid the full charge it brings,
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there ?
The coward flies ; and, flying, is undone.
Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought ?

I think of nothing else ; I see ! I feel it !
All nature, like an earthquake, trembling round !
I see the Judge enthron'd ! the flaming guard !
The volume open'd ! open'd ev'ry heart !
A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought !
No patron ! intercessor none ! now past
The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour !
For guilt no plea ! to pain, no pause ! no bound !
Inexorable, all ! and all extreme !
Nor man alone ; the foe of God and man,
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd.
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll
His baleful eyes ! he curses whom he dreads ;
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

YOUNG.

CHAPTER IV.

PATHETIC PIECES.

SECTION I.

Hymn to Humanity.

PARENT of virtue, if thine ear
 Attend not now to sorrow's cry ;
 If now the pity-streaming tear
 Should haply on thy cheek be dry ;
 Indulge my votive strain, O sweet Humanity !

Come, ever welcome to my breast !
 A tender, but a cheerful guest.
 Nor always in the gloomy cell
 Of life-consuming sorrow dwell ;
 For sorrow, long-indulg'd and slow,
 Is to Humanity a foe ;
 And grief, that makes the heart its prey,
 Wears sensibility away.
 Then comes, sweet nymph, instead of thee,
 The gloomy fiend, Stupidity.

O may that fiend be banish'd far,
 Though passions hold perpetual war !
 Nor ever let me cease to know
 The pulse that throbs at joy or woe.
 Nor let my vacant cheek be dry,
 When sorrow fills a brother's eye ;

Nor may the tear that frequent flows
From private or from social woes,
E'er make this pleasing sense depart :
Ye cares, O harden not my heart !

If the fair star of fortune smile,
Let not its flatt'ring pow'r beguile ;
Nor, born along the fav'ring tide,
My full sails swell with bloating pride.
Let me from wealth but hope content,
Rememb'ring still it was but lent ;
To modest merit spread my store,
Unbar my hospitable door ;
Nor feed, for pomp, an idle train,
While want unpitied pines in vain.

If Heav'n, in ev'ry purpose wise,
The envied lot of wealth denies ;
If doom'd to drag lifes painful load
Through poverty's uneven road,
And, for the due bread of the day,
Destin'd to toil as well as pray ;
To thee, Humanity, still true,
I'll wish the good I cannot do ;
And give the wretch, that passes by,
A soothing word—a tear—a sigh.

Howe'er exalted or deprest,
Be ever mine the feeling breast.
From me remove the stagnant mind
Of languid indolence, reclin'd ;
The soul that one long sabbath keeps,
And through the sun's whole circle sleeps ;

Dull peace, that dwells in folly's eye,
 And self attending vanity.
 Alike the foolish and the vain
 Are strangers to the sense humane.

O for that sympathetic glow
 Which taught the holy tear to flow,
 When the prophetic eye survey'd
 Sion in future ashes laid ;
 Or, rais'd to heav'n, implor'd that bread
 That thousands in the desert fed !
 Or, when the heart o'er friendship's grave
 Sigh'd—and forgot its pow'r to save——
 O for that sympathetic glow,
 Which taught the holy tear to flow !

It comes : it fills my lab'ring breast,
 I feel my beating heart oppress.
 Oh ! hear that lonely widow's wail !
 See her dim eye ; her aspect pale !
 To Heav'n she turns in deep despair ;
 Her infants wonder at her pray'r,
 And, mingling tears they know not why,
 Lift up their little hands, and cry.
 O Lord ! their moving sorrows see !
 Support them, sweet Humanity !

Life, fill'd with grief's distressful train,
 For ever asks the tear humane.
 Behold in yon unconscious grove
 The victims of ill-fated love !
 Heard you that agonizing throe ?
 Sure this is not romantic woe !

The golden day of joy is o'er ;
And now they part—to meet no more.
Assist them, hearts from anguish free !
Assist them, sweet Humanity !

Parent of virtue, if thine ear
Attend not now to sorrow's cry ;
If now the pity-streaming tear
Should haply on thy cheek be dry,
Indulge my votive strain, O sweet Humanity !
LANGHORNE.

SECTION II.

A Night Piece.

WHILE night in solemn shade invests the pole,
And calm reflection sooths the pensive soul,
While reason undisturb'd asserts her sway,
And life's deceitful colours fade away ;
To thee, all-conscious Presence ! I devote
This peaceful interval of sober thought :
Here all my better faculties confine ;
And be this hour of sacred silence thine !

If, by the day's illusive scenes misled,
My erring soul from virtue's path has stray'd ;
Snar'd by example, or by passion warm'd,
Some false delight my giddy sense has charm'd ;
My calmer thoughts the wretched choice reprove,
And my best hopes are centred in thy love.

Depriv'd of this, can life one joy afford?
 Its utmost boast a vain unmeaning word.

But, ah! how oft my lawless passions rove,
 And break those awful precepts I approve,
 Pursue the fatal impulse I abhor,
 And violate the virtue I adore!
 Oft, when thy better spirit's guardian care
 Warn'd my fond soul to shun the tempting snare,
 My stubborn will his gentle aid reprefs'd,
 And check'd the rising goodness in my breast;
 Mad with vain hopes, or urg'd by false desires,
 Still'd his soft voice, and quench'd his sacred fires.

With grief opprefs'd, and prostrate in the dust,
 Shouldst thou condemn, I own thy sentence just.
 But oh! thy softer titles let me claim,
 And plead my cause by mercy's gentle name.
 Mercy! that wipes the penitential tear,
 And dissipates the horrors of despair;
 From righteous justice steals the vengeful hour,
 Softens the dreadful attribute of pow'r,
 Disarms the wrath of an offended God,
 And seals my pardon in a Saviour's blood!

All-pow'rful Grace, exert thy gentle sway,
 And teach my rebel passions to obey;
 Lest lurking folly, with insidious art,
 Regain my volatile inconstant heart!
 Shall every high resolve devotion frames
 Be only lifeless sounds and specious names?
 Oh rather, while thy hopes and fears control,
 In this still hour, each motion of my soul,
 Secure its safety by a sudden doom,
 And be the soft retreat of sleep my tomb!
 Calm let me slumber in that dark repose,
 Till the last morn its orient beam disclose:

Then, when the great archangel's potent sound
Shallecho thro' creation's ample round,
Wak'd from the sleep of death, with joy survey
The op'ning splendours of eternal day. CARTER.

SECTION III.

Contemplations among the tombs.

By the blue taper's trembling light,
No more I waste the wakeful night,
Intent with endless view to pore
The schoolmen and the sages o'er:
Their books from wisdom widely stray,
Or point at best the longest way.
I'll seek a readier path, and go
Where wisdom's surely taught below.

How deep yon azure dies the sky !
Where orbs of gold unnumber'd lie,
While thro' their ranks in silver pride
The nether crescent seems to glide.
The slumb'ring breeze forgets to breathe,
The lake is smooth and clear beneath,
Where once again the spangled shew
Descends to meet our eyes below.
The grounds which on the right aspire,
In dimness from the view retire :
The left presents a place of graves,
Whose wall the silent water laves.
That steeple guides thy doubtful sight
Among the livid gleams of night ;
There pass with melancholy state,
By all the solemn heaps of fate,

And think, as softly-fad you tread
Above the venerable dead,
“Time was, like thee, they life possést,
And time shall be, that thou shalt rest.”

Those graves with bending oſier bound,
That nameleſs heave the crumbled ground,
Quick to the glancing thought diſcloſe
Where toil and poverty reſoſe.

The flat ſmooth ſtones that bear a name,
The chifſel’s ſlender help to fame ;
(Which, ere our ſet of friends decay,
Their frequent ſteps may wear away ;)
A middle race of mortals own,
Men, half ambitious, all unknown.

The marble tombs that riſe on high,
Whoſe dead in vaulted arches lie,
Whoſe pillars ſwell with ſculptur’d ſtones,
Arms, angels, epitaphs, and bones,
Theſe (all the poor remains of ſtate)
Adorn the rich, or praife the great ;
Who while on earth in fame they live,
Are ſenſeleſs of the fame they give.
Ha ! while I gaze, pale Cynthia fades,
The burſting earth unveils the ſhades !
All flow, and wan, and wrapp’d with ſhrouds,
They riſe in viſionary crowds,
And all with ſober accent cry,
“Think, Mortal, what it is to die.”

Now from yon black and fun’ral yew,
That bathes the charnel-houſe with dew,
Methinks I hear a voice begin ;
(Ye ravens, ceaſe your croaking din,
Ye tolling clocks, no time reſound
O’er the long lake and midnight ground ;)

It sends a peal of hollow groans,
Thus speaking from among the bones.

“ When men my scythe and darts supply,
How great a king of fears am I !
They view me like the last of things :
They make, and then they dread, my stings.
Fools ! if you less provoke your fears,
No more my spectre form appears.
Death’s but a path that must be trod,
If man would ever pass to God :
A port of calms, a state of ease
From the rough rage of swelling seas.”

“ Why then thy flowing fable stoles,
Deep pendent cypresses, mourning poles,
Loose scarfs to fall athwart thy weeds,
Long palls, drawn herbes, cover’d steed’s,
And plumes of black, that as they tread,
Nod o’er the scutcheons of the dead ?”

“ Nor can the parted body know,
Nor wants the soul, these forms of woe :
As men who long in prison dwell,
With lamps that glimmer round the cell,
Whene’er their suff’ring years are run,
Spring forth to greet the glitt’ring sun ;
Such joy, tho’ far transcending sense,
Have pious souls at parting hence.
On earth, and in the body plac’d,
A few, and evil years they waste :
But when their chains are cast aside,
See the glad scene unfolding wide,
Clap the glad wing, and tow’r away,
And mingle with the blaze of day.”

SECTION IV.

In every condition of life, praise is due to the Creator.

PRAISE to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days ;
Bounteous source of ev'ry joy,
Let thy praise our tongues employ :

For the blessings of the field,
For the stores the gardens yield,
For the vine's exalted juice,
For the gen'rous olive's use.

Flocks that whiten all the plain ;
Yellow sheaves of ripen'd grain ;
Clouds that drop their fatt'ning dews ;
Suns that temp'rate warmth diffuse ;

All that spring, with bounteous hand,
Scatters o'er the smiling land ;
All that lib'ral autumn pours,
From her rich o'erflowing stores :

These to thee, my God, we owe,
Source from whence all blessings flow ;
And for these my soul shall raise
Grateful vows, and solemn praise.

Yet, should rising whirlwinds tear
From its stem the rip'ning ear ;
Should the fig-tree's blasted shoot
Drop her green, untimely fruit ;

Should the vine put forth no more,
Nor the olive yield her store ;
Though the sick'ning flocks should fail,
And the herds desert the stall ;

Should thine alter'd hand restrain
The early and the latter rain ;
Blast each op'ning bud of joy,
And the rising year destroy :

Yet, to thee my soul should raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise ;
And, when ev'ry blessing's flown,
Love thee—for thyself alone.

BARBAULD.

SECTION V.

Folly of human pursuits.

BLEST be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest beneath this humble shed !
The world's a stately bark, on dang'rous seas,
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril.
Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms ;
And meditate on scenes more silent still ;
Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.
Here, like a shepherd, gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
Eager ambition's fiery chase I see.
I see the circling hunt of noisy men
Burst law's enclosure, leap the mounds of right,
Pursuing and pursu'd, each other's prey ;
As wolves, for rapine ; as the fox, for wiles ;
Till death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.
Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour ?
What, tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame,

Earth's highest station ends in, "here he lies:"
 And "dust to dust" concludes her noblest song.
 If this song lives, posterity shall know
 One, tho' in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
 Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late ;
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
 For future vacancies in church, or state ;
 Some avocation deeming it—to die ;
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich ;
 Guilt's blunder ! and the loudest laugh of hell.
 O my coevals ! remnant of yourselves !
 Poor human ruins, tott'ring o'er the grave !
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
 Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil ?
 Shall our pale, wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age ?
 With av'rice, and convulsions grasping hard ?
 Grasping at air ! for what has earth beside ?
 Man wants but little ; nor that little, long :
 How soon must he resign his very dust,
 Which frugal nature lent him for an hour !
 Years unexperienc'd rush on num'rous ills ;
 And soon as man, expert from time, has found
 The key of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,
 And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,
 Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
 And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
 To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
 I still survive : and am I fond of life,
 Who scarce can think it possible I live ?
 Alive by miracle ! if still alive,
 Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,

Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
Life's lee is not more shallow, than impure,
And vapid ; sense and reason show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.
O thou great Arbiter of life and death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial fun !
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
The worms inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence ; and couldst know
No motive, but my bliss ; with Abraham's joy,
Thy call I follow to the land unknown ;
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust :
Or life, or death, is equal ; neither weighs ;
All weight in this—O let me live to thee ! YOUNG.

SECTION VI.

An address to the Deity.

GOD of my life, and Author of my days !
Permit my feeble voice to lisp thy praise ;
And trembling take upon a mortal tongue
That hallow'd name to harps of seraphs sung :
Yet here the brightest seraphs could no more
Than hide their faces, tremble, and adore.
Worms, angels, men, in ev'ry diff'rent sphere
Are equal all, for all are nothing here.
All nature faints beneath the mighty name,
Which nature's works, thro' all her parts, proclaim.
I feel that name my inmost thoughts control,
And breathe an awful stillness through my soul :

As by a charm, the waves of grief subside ;
Impetuous passion stops her headlong tide.
At thy felt presence all emotions cease,
And my hush'd spirit finds a sudden peace ;
Till ev'ry worldly thought within me dies,
And earth's gay pageants vanish from my eyes ;
Till all my sense is lost in infinite,
And one vast object fills my aching sight.

But soon, alas ! this holy calm is broke ;
My soul submits to wear her wonted yoke ;
With shackled pinions strives to soar in vain,
And mingles with the dross of earth again.
But he, our gracious Master, kind as just,
Knowing our frame, remembers man is dust.
His spirit, ever brooding o'er our mind,
Sees the first wish to better hopes inclin'd ;
Marks the young dawn of ev'ry virtuous aim,
And fans the smoking flax into a flame.
His ears are open to the softest cry,
His grace descends to meet the lifted eye ;
He reads the language of a silent tear,
And sighs are incense from a heart sincere.
Such are the vows, the sacrifice I give ;
Accept the vow, and bid the suppliant live :
From each terrestrial bondage set me free ;
Still ev'ry wish that centres not in thee ;
Bid my fond hopes, my vain disquiets cease,
And point my path to everlasting peace.

If the soft hand of winning pleasure leads
By living waters, and thro' flow'ry meads,
When all is smiling, tranquil, and serene,
And vernal beauty paints the flatt'ring scene,
Oh ! teach me to elude each latent snare,
And whisper to my sliding heart—Beware !

With caution let me hear the Syren's voice,
And doubtful, with a trembling heart, rejoice.
If friendless, in a vale of tears I stray,
Where briers wound, and thorns perplex my way,
Still let my steady soul thy goodness see,
And with strong confidence lay hold in thee ;
With equal eye my various lot receive,
Resign'd to die, or resolute to live ;
Prepar'd to kiss the sceptre or the rod,
While God is seen in all, and all in God.

I read his awful name emblazon'd high
With golden letters on th'illumin'd sky :
Nor less the mystic characters I see
Wrought in each flow'r, inscribed on ev'ry tree :
In ev'ry leaf that trembles to the breeze,
I hear the voice of God among the trees.
With thee in shady solitudes I walk,
With thee in busy crowded cities talk ;
In ev'ry creature own thy forming pow'r ;
In each event thy providence adore :
Thy hopes shall animate my drooping soul,
Thy precepts guide me, and thy fear control.
Thus shall I rest unmov'd by all alarms,
Secure within the temple of thine arms,
From anxious cares, from gloomy terrors free,
And feel myself omnipotent in thee.
Then when the last, the closing hour draws nigh,
And earth recedes before my swimming eye ;
When trembling on the doubtful edge of fate
I stand, and stretch my view to either state ;
Teach me to quit this transitory scene
With decent triumph, and a look serene ;
Teach me to fix my ardent hopes on high,
And, having liv'd to thee, in thee to die. BARBAULD.

SECTION III.

A monody on the death of Lady Lyttelton.

At length escap'd from ev'ry human eye,
 From ev'ry duty, ev'ry care,
 That in my mournful thoughts might claim a share,
 Or force my tears their flowing stream to dry ;
 Beneath the gloom of this embow'ring shade,
 This lone retreat, for tender sorrow made,
 I now may give my burden'd heart relief,
 And pour forth all my stores of grief ;
 Of grief surpassing ev'ry other woe,
 Far as the purest bliss, the happiest love
 Can on th' ennobled mind bestow,
 Exceeds the vulgar joys that move
 Our gross desires, inelegant and low.

Ye tufted groves, ye gently-falling rills,
 Ye high o'ershadowing hills,
 Ye lawns gay-smiling with perpetual green,
 Oft have you my Lucy seen !
 But never shall you now behold her more :
 Nor will she now, with fond delight,
 And taste refin'd, your rural charms explore.
 Clos'd are those beauteous eyes in endless night,
 Those beauteous eyes, where beaming us'd to shine
 Reason's pure light, and virtue's spark divine.

In vain I look around
 O'er all the well-known ground,
 My Lucy's wanted footsteps to descry ;
 Where oft we us'd to walk ;
 Where oft in tender talk
 We saw the summer sun go down the sky ;

Nor by yon fountain's side,
Nor where its waters glide
Along the valley, can she now be found :
In all the wide-stretch'd prospects ample bound,
No more my mournful eye
Can aught of her espy,
But the sad sacred earth where her dear relics lie.

O shades of Hagley, where is now your boast ?
Your bright inhabitant is lost.
You she preferr'd to all the gay resorts
Where female vanity might wish to shine,
The pomp of cities, and the pride of courts.
Her modest beauties shunn'd the public eye :
To your sequester'd dales
And flower-embroider'd vales,
From an admiring world she chose to fly :
With Nature there retir'd, and Nature's God,
The silent paths of wisdom trod,
And banish'd every passion from her breast ;
But those, the gentlest and the best,
Whose holy flames, with energy divine,
The virtuous heart enliven and improve,
The conjugal and the maternal love.

Sweet babes ! who like the little playful fawns
Were wont to trip along these verdant lawns,
By your delighted mother's side,
Who now your infant steps shall guide ?
Ah ! where is now the hand, whose tender care
To ev'ry virtue would have form'd your youth,
And strew'd with flow'rs the thorny ways of truth ?
O loss beyond repair !

O wretched father ! left alone,
 To weep their dire misfortune, and thy own !
 How shall thy weaken'd mind oppress'd with woe,
 And, drooping o'er thy Lucy's grave,
 Perform the duties that you doubly owe,
 Now she, alas ! is gone,
 From folly and from vice their helpless age to save ?

Oh ! how each beauty of her mind and face
 Was brighten'd by some sweet peculiar grace !
 How eloquent in ev'ry look
 Thro' her expressive eyes her soul distinctly spoke !
 How did her manners, by the world refin'd,
 Leave all the taint of modish vice behind,
 And make each charm of polish'd courts agree
 With candid Truth's simplicity,
 And uncorrupted Innocence !
 To great, to more than manly sense,
 She join'd the soft'ning influence
 Of more than female tenderness.
 How, in the thoughtless days of wealth and joy,
 Which oft the care of others' good destroy.
 Her kindly-melting heart,
 To every want, and every woe,
 To guilt itself when in distress,
 The balm of pity would impart,
 And all relief that bounty could bestow ?
 E'en for the kid or lamb, that pour'd its life
 Beneath the bloody knife,
 Her gentle tears would fall ;
 Tears, from sweet virtue's source, benevolent to all.

Not only good and kind,
 But strong and elevated was her mind :

A spirit that with noble pride
Could look superior down
On fortune's smile or frown ;
That could, without regret or pain,
To virtue's lowest duty sacrifice
Or interest or ambition's highest prize ;
That, injur'd or offended, never tried
Its dignity by vengeance to maintain,
But by magnanimous disdain.
A wit that, temperately bright,
With inoffensive light
All pleasing shone ; nor ever pass'd
The decent bounds that wisdom's sober hand,
And sweet benevolence's mild command,
And bashful modesty, before it cast.
A prudence undeceiving, undeceiv'd,
That nor too little nor too much believ'd ;
That scorn'd unjust suspicion's coward fear,
And, without weakness, knew to be sincere.
Such Lucy was, when in her fairest days,
Amidst th' acclaim of universal praise.

In life's and glory's freshest bloom,
Death came remorseless on, and sunk her to the tomb.

So, where the silent streams of Liris glide,
In the soft bosom of Campania's vale,
When now the wint'ry tempests all are fled,
And genial summer breathes her gentle gale,
The verdant orange lifts its beauteous head ;
From ev'ry branch the balmy flow'rets rise,
On ev'ry bough the golden fruits are seen ;
With odours sweet it fills the smiling skies,
The wood-nymphs tend it, and th' Idalian queen.

But, in the midst of all its blooming pride,
 A sudden blast from Apenninus blows,
 Cold with perpetual snows ;
 The tender blighted plant shrinks up its leaves, and dies.

O best of women ! dearer far to me
 Than when, in blooming life,
 My lips first call'd thee wife ;
 How can my soul endure the loss of thee ?
 How in the world, to me a desert grown,
 Abandon'd and alone,
 Without my sweet companion can I live ?
 Without thy lovely smile,
 The dear reward of ev'ry virtuous toil,
 What pleasures now can pall'd ambition give ?
 E'en the delightful sense of well-earn'd praise
 Unshar'd by thee, no more my lifeless thoughts could
 raise.

For my distracted mind
 What succour can I find ?
 On whom for consolation shall I call ?
 Support me, ev'ry friend :
 Your kind assistance lend,
 To bear the weight of this oppressive woe.
 Alas ! each friend of mine,
 My dear departed love, so much was thine,
 That none has any comfort to bestow.
 My books, the best relief
 In ev'ry other grief,
 Are now with your idea sadden'd all :
 Each fav'rite author we together read
 My tortur'd memory wounds, and speaks of Lucy dead.

We were the happiest pair of human kind :
The rolling year its various course perform'd,
And back return'd again ;
Another, and another, smiling came,
And saw our happiness unchang'd remain.

Still in her golden chain
Harmonious concord did our wishes bind :
Our studies, pleasures, taste, the same.

O fatal, fatal stroke !
That all this pleasing fabric love had rais'd
Of rare felicity,
On which e'en wanton vice with envy gaz'd,
And every scheme of bliss our hearts had form'd,
With soothing hope for many a future day,
In one sad moment broke !

Yet, O my soul ! thy rising murmurs stay ;
Nor dare th' all-wise Disposer to arraign,
Or against his supreme decree
With impious grief complain.

That all thy full-blown joys at once should fade,
Was his most righteous will—and be that will obey'd.

Would thy fond love his grace to her control ;
And, in these low abodes of sin and pain,
Her pure exalted soul,
Unjustly, for thy partial good, detain ?
No—rather strive thy grov'ling mind to raise
Up to that unclouded blaze,
That heav'nly radiance of eternal light,
In which enthron'd she now with pity sees,
How frail, how insecure, how slight,
Is every mortal bliss ;
E'en love itself, if rising by degrees
Beyond the bounds of this imperfect state,

Whose fleeting joys so soon must end,
It does not to its sovereign good ascend.

Rise then, my soul, with hope elate,
And seek those regions of serene delight,
Whose peaceful path, and ever-open gate,
No feet but those of harden'd guilt shall miss :
There death himself thy Lucy shall restore :
There yield up all his pow'r ne'er to divide you more.

LORD LYTTELTON.

CHAPTER V.

PROMISCUOUS AND MIXED PIECES.

SECTION I.

Hymn to Contentment.

LOVELY, lasting peace of mind !
 Sweet delight of human kind !
 Heav'nly born, and bred on high,
 To crown the fav'rites of the sky,
 With more of happiness below,
 Than victors in a triumph know !
 Whither, oh whither art thou fled,
 To lay thy meek contented head ?
 What happy region dost thou please
 To make the seat of calms and ease ?

Ambition searches all its sphere
 Of pomp and state, to meet thee there :
 Increasing avarice would find
 Thy presence in its gold inslin'd :
 The bold advent'rer ploughs his way
 Through rocks, amidst the foaming sea,
 To gain thy love ; and then perceives
 Thou wert not in the rocks and waves.
 The silent heart which grief assails,
 Treads soft and lonesome o'er the vales,
 Sees daisies open, rivers run,
 And seeks (as I have vainly done)
 Amusing thought ; but learns to know
 That solitude's the nurse of woe.

No real happiness is found
 In trailing purple o'er the ground ;
 Or in a soul exalted high,
 To range the circuit of the sky,
 Converse with stars above, and know
 All nature in its forms below :
 The rest it seeks, in seeking dies ;
 And doubts at last for knowledge rise.

Lovely, lasting peace, appear ;
 This world itself, if thou art here,
 Is once again with Eden blest,
 And man contains it in his breast.

'Twas thus, as under shade I stood,
 I sung my wishes to the wood,
 And, lost in thought, no more perceiv'd
 The branches whisper as they wav'd :
 It seem'd as all the quiet place
 Confess'd the presence of the grace ;
 When thus she spoke :—" Go rule thy will,
 Bid thy wild passions all be still ;
 Know God, and, bring thy heart to know
 The joys which from religion flow ;
 Then ev'ry grace shall prove its guest,
 And I'll be there to crown the rest."

Oh ! by yonder mossy seat,
 In my hours of sweet retreat,
 Might I thus my soul employ,
 With sense of gratitude and joy,
 Rais'd as ancient prophets were,
 In heav'nly vision, praise, and pray'r ;
 Pleasing all men, hurting none,
 Pleas'd and blest with God alone ;
 Then while the gardens take my sight,
 With all the colours of delight ;

While silver waters glide along,
To please my ear, and court my song;
I'll lift my voice and tune my string,
And thee, Great Source of Nature, sing.

The sun that walks his airy way,
To light the world, and give the day;
The moon that shines with borrow'd light;
The stars that gild the gloomy night;
The seas that roll unnumber'd waves;
The wood that spreads its shady leaves;
The field whose ears conceal the grain,
The yellow treasure of the plain:
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:
They speak their Maker as they can,
But want and ask the tongue of man.

Go search among your idle dreams,
Your busy or your vain extremes;
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next begun in this.

PARNELL.

SECTION II.

An elegy written in a country church-yard.

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.
Now fades the glimm'ring landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his drony flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,
 The moping owl does to the moon complain
 Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
 Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
 Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
 Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
 The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
 The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
 The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
 No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
 Or busy housewife ply her evening care :
 Nor children run to lisp their fire's return,
 Or climb his knees the envied kisses to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield ;
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;
 How jocund did they drive their teams afield !
 How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;
 Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
 Await, alike, th' inevitable hour ;
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
 If mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
 Where thro the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flatt'ry sooth the dull cold ear of death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unrol ;
Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear :
Full many a flow'r is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest ;
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues ; but their crimes confin'd,
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,

Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
 With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
 Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
 They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect,
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd muse,
 The place of fame and elegy supply:
 And many a holy text around she strews,
 That teach the rustic moralist to die;

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
 This pleasing, anxious being e'er resign'd,
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
 Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires:
 E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
 E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

Nor thee, who mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
 If, chance, by lonely contemplation led,
 Some kindred spirit shall enquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
 " Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
 Brushing, with hasty steps, the dews away,
 To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His little length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pour upon the brook that bubbles by.

Hard by yon wood, now smiling, as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies, he would rove ;
Now drooping, woeful, wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree :
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow thro' the church-yard path we saw him borne :
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown ;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send :
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear ;
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

GRAY.

SECTION III.

The Deserted Village.

SWEET Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the lab'ring swain;
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's ling'ring blooms delay'd;
Dear lovely bow'rs of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when ev'ry sport could please,
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
How often have I paus'd on ev'ry charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighb'ring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and youthful converse made!
How often have I blest'd the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play;
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd;
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And flights of art and feats of strength went round.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These round thy bow'rs their cheerful influence shed;
These were thy charms,—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village! loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bow'rs the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:

One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, chok'd with sedges, works its weedy way ;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest ;
Amidst thy desert walks, the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bow'rs in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mould'ring wall ;
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made :
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When ev'ry rood of ground maintain'd its man ;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store ;
Just gave what life requir'd, but gave no more :
His best companions, innocence and health ;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd : trade's unfeeling train
Unsurp the land, and dispossess the swain.
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumb'rous pomp repose ;
And ev'ry want to luxury allied,
And ev'ry pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask but little room,

Those healthful sports that grac'd the peaceful scene,
 Liv'd in each look, and brighten'd all the green—
 These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
 And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
 Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's pow'r.
 Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
 Amidst thy tangling walks, and ruin'd grounds;
 And, many a year elaps'd, return to view
 Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew;
 Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
 Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wand'rings round this world of care,
 In all my griefs—and God has giv'n my share—
 I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
 Amidst these humble bow'rs to lay me down;
 To husband out life's taper at the close,
 And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
 I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
 Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill;
 Around my fire an ev'ning group to draw,
 And tell of all I felt, and all I saw:
 And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
 Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
 Here to return—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
 Retreat from care, that never must be mine!
 How blest is he, who crowns, in shades like these,
 A youth of labour with an age of ease;
 Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
 And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
 For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
 Explore the mine, or tempt the dang'rous deep;

No furly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate ;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend ;
Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way ;
And, all his prospects bright'ning to the last,
His heav'n commences ere the world be past !

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at ev'ning's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose ;
There as I pass'd, with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below ;
The swain, responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whisp'ring wind,
And the loud laugh, that spoke the vacant mind ;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled :
All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring ;
She, wretched matron ! forc'd in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wint'ry fagot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn ;
She only left, of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain !

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd,
 And still where man a garden flow'r grows wild,
 There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
 The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
 A man he was to all the country dear,
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year :
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
 Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change, his place.
 Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for pow'r,
 By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour ;
 Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
 More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
 His house was known to all the vagrant train ;
 He chid their wand'rings, but reliev'd their pain.
 The long remember'd beggar was his guest,
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;
 The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
 Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd :
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
 Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away ;
 Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
 Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
 Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe ;
 Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
 His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
 And e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side :
 But, in his duty prompt at ev'ry call,
 He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all :
 And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
 To tempt her new-fledg'd offspring to the skies ;
 He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
 Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed, where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismay'd,
The rev'rend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last falt'ring accents whisper'd praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place ;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway ;
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran ;
E'en children follow'd with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd ;
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd.
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were giv'n ;
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heav'n :
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Tho' round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view ;
I knew him well, and ev'ry truant knew.
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face :
Full well they laugh'd, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;

Full well the busy whisper circling round
 Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd.
 Yet he was kind ; or, if severe in aught,
 The love he bore to learning was in fault.
 The village all declar'd how much he knew :
 'Twas certain he could write and cypher too ;
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage ;
 And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.
 In arguing too the parson own'd his skill,
 For, e'en tho' vanquish'd, he could argue still ;
 While words of learned length, and thund'ring sound,
 Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around ;
 And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,
 That one small head could carry all he knew.
 But past is all his fame : the very spot
 Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.

SECTION IV.

The same subject continued.

NEAR yonder thorn that lifts its head on high.
 Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
 Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,
 Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retir'd,
 Where village statesmen talk with looks profound,
 And news much older than their ale went round.
 Imagination fondly stoops to trace
 The parlour splendours of that festive place ;
 The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
 The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door ;
 The chest contriv'd a double debt to pay,
 A bed by night, a chest of draw'rs by day ;

The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose ;
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspen boughs, and flow'rs, and fennel gay ;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain transitory splendour ! could not all
Reprieve the tott'ring mansion from its fall ?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart ;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care ;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail ;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his pond'rous strength, and lean to hear ;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling blifs go round.

Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple pleasures of the lowly train :
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway ;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfin'd :
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrustingly asks, if this be joy ?

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
 The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
 'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and a happy land.
 Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
 And shouting folly hails them from her shore ;
 Hoards, e'en beyond the miser's wish, abound,
 And rich men flock from all the world around ;
 Yet count our gains : this wealth is but a name
 That leaves our useful product still the same.
 Not so the loss : the man of wealth and pride
 Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds ;
 The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
 Has robb'd the neighb'ring fields of half their growth ;
 His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green.
 Around the world each needful product flies,
 For all the luxuries the world supplies :
 While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure all,
 In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.
 As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
 Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
 Slights ev'ry borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
 Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes ;
 But when those charms are past, (for charms are frail,)
 When time advances, and when lovers fail,
 She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
 In all the glaring impotence of dress :
 Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd,
 In nature's simplest charms at first array'd ;
 But, verging to decline, its splendours rise,
 Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise ;

While, scourg'd by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band ;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave !

Where then, ah where, shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride ?
If, to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—what waits him there ?
To see profusion that he must not share ;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combin'd
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind ;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow creature's woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade ;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train ;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy !
Sure these denote one universal joy !
Are these thy serious thoughts ? Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shiv'ring female lies.
She, once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed ;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn :
Now lost to all ; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head ;

And pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the show'r,
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,
 She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.
 Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
 Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
 E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
 At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

Ah no! to distant climes, a dreary scene,
 Where half the convex world intrudes between,
 Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
 Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
 Far diff'rent there from all that charm'd before,
 The various terrors of that horrid shore;
 Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
 And fiercely shed intolerable day;
 Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
 But silent bats in drowfy clusters cling:
 Those pois'nous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd,
 Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
 Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
 The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
 Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey;
 And savage men, more murd'rous still than they:
 While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
 Mingling the ravag'd landscape with the skies.

Alas! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day,
 That call'd them from their native walks away;
 When the poor exiles, ev'ry pleasure past,
 Hung round the bow'rs, and fondly look'd their last,
 And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
 For seats like these beyond the western main;
 And shudd'ring still to face the distant deep,
 Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep!

The good old fire the first prepar'd to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe:
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his hapless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for her father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And bless'd the cot where ev'ry pleasure rose;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O luxury! thou curst by Heav'n's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms, by thee to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own.
At ev'ry draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapp'd their strength, and ev'ry part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the bus'ness of destruction done;
E'en now, methinks, as pond'ring here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anch'ring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with ev'ry gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;

And piety with wishes plac'd above,
 And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
 And thou, sweet poetry, thou loveliest maid,
 Still first to fly when sensual joys invade ;
 Unfit in these degen'rate times of shame
 To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame ;
 Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
 My shame in crowds, my solitary pride !
 Thou source of bliss as well as source of woe,
 That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so ;
 Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
 Thou source of ev'ry virtue, fare thee well !
 Farewell ! and oh ! where'er thy voice be tried,
 On Torrio's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
 Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
 Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
 Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
 Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime ;
 Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain,
 Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain !
 Teach him that flates, of native strength possess'd,
 Though very poor, may still be very blest ;
 That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
 As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away ;
 While self-dependent pow'r can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky. GOLDSMITH.

SECTION V.

The Traveller ; or, a prospect of society.

Inscribed to the Author's Brother.

REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
 Or by the lazy Scheld, or wand'ring Po ;

Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door ;
Or where Campanià's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies ;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd, fondly turns to thee :
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags, at each remove, a length'ning chain.

Perpetual blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend :
Bless'd be that spot where cheerful guests retire,
To pause from toil, and trim their ev'ning fire :
Bless'd that abode where want and pain repair,
And ev'ry stranger finds a ready chair :
Bless'd be those feasts, with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale ;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good !

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wand'ring spent, and care ;
Impell'd, with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good that mocks me with the view ;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet as I follow flies ;
Me fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend ;
And plac'd on high, above the storms career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear ;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains, extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus creation's charms around combine,
 Amidst the store, should thankless pride repine?
 Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
 That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
 Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
 These little things are great to little man;
 And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
 Exults in all the good of all mankind.

Ye glitt'ring towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd;
 Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
 Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
 Ye bending swains, that dress the flow'ry vale;
 For me your tributary stores combine;
 Creation's heir! the world, the world is mine!

As some lone miser, visiting his store,
 Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
 Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
 Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still;
 Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
 Pleas'd with each good that Heav'n to man supplies;
 Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
 To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
 And oft I wish, amidst the scene, to find
 Some spot to real happiness consign'd;
 Where my worn soul, each wand'ring hope at rest,
 May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

But where to find that happiest spot below,
 Who can direct when all pretend to know?
 The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
 Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
 Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
 And his long nights of revelry and ease:
 The naked negro, panting at the line,
 Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine;

Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam ;
His first, best country, ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind ;
As diff'rent good, by art or nature giv'n,
To diff'rent nations, makes their blessings ev'n.
Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her blifs at labour's earnest call ;
With food as well the peasant is supplied
On Idra's cliffs, as Arno's shelvy side ;
And tho' the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks by custom turn to beds of down.
From art more various are the blessings sent,
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content ;
Yet these each other's pow'r so strong contest,
That either seem destructive of the rest.
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails ;
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence ev'ry state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone.
Each to the fav'rite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends ;
Till carried to excess in each domain,
This fav'rite good begets peculiar pain.
But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies :
Here for a while, my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit, in sorrow for mankind ;
Like yon neglected shrub at random cast,
That shades the step, and sighs at ev'ry blast.

Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer Italy extends ;
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side;
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temple's mouldring tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.
Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in diff'rent climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground ;
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die :
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand,
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the blifs that sense alone bestows ;
And sensual blifs is all the nation knows,
In florid beauty groves and fields appear ;
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign :
Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;
Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue ;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind ;
For wealth was theirs, not far remov'd the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state :
At her command the palace learn'd to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column fought the skies :
The canvas glow'd beyond e'en nature warm ;
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form ;

Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail ;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unman'd, and lords without a slave :
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.
Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride :
From these the feeble heart and long fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The pasteboard triumph, and the cavalcade ;
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in ev'ry grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd ;
The sports of children satisfy the child.
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long controul,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul ;
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanings occupy the mind :
As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defac'd by time, and tott'ring in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed ;
And wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

SECTION VI.

The same subject continued,

My soul, turn from them—turn we to survey
Where roughest climes a nobler race display ;
Where the bleak Swifs their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread :

No product here the barren hills afford,
 But man and steel, the foldier and his sword.
 No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
 But winter ling'ring chills the lap of May;
 No zephyr fondly fues the mountain's breast,
 But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.
 Yet still e'en here content can spread a charm,
 Redrefs the clime, and all its rage disarm.
 Tho' poor the peasant's hut, his feast tho' small,
 He sees his little lot the lot of all;
 Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
 To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
 No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
 To make him loathe his vegetable meal;
 But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
 Each with contracting, fits him to the soil.
 Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
 Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes;
 With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
 Or drives his vent'rous plough-share to the steep;
 Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
 And drags the struggling savage into day.
 At night returning, ev'ry labour sped,
 He sits him down the monarch of a shed:
 Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
 His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze;
 While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,
 Displays her cleanly platter on the board:
 And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus ev'ry good his native wilds impart,
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart;
 And e'en those hills that round his mansion rise,
 Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.

Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms :
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast ;
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd :
Their wants but few, their wishes all confin'd.
Yet let them only share the praises due ;
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few :
For ev'ry want that stimulates the breast
Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest.
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies ;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy ;
Unknown those pow'rs that raise the soul to flame,
Catch ev'ry nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a mould'ring fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire ;
Unfit for raptures ; or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till buried in debauch the blifs expire.
But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow ;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low :
For, as refinement stops, from fire to son,
Unalter'd, unimprov'd, the manners run ;
And love's and friendship's finely-pointed dart
Falls blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit like falcons cowering on the nest :
Cut all the gentler morals, such as play
Thro' life's more cultur'd walks, and charm the way ;

These, far dispers'd, on tim'rous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn—and France displays her bright domain.
Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please ;
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murm'ring Loire !
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And, freshen'd from the wave, the zephyr flew ;
And haply, tho' my harsh touch falt'ring still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wond'rous pow'r,
And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour !
Alike all ages : dames of ancient days
Have led their children thro' the mirthful maze ;
And the gay grandfire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burden of threescore.

So gay a life these thoughtless realms display ;
Thus idly busy rolls their world away.
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear ;
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current ; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land.
From courts to camps, to cottages, it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise :
They please, are pleas'd, they give to get esteem ;
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise :
For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought ;

And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper-lace:
Here beggar-pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year:
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land;
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onward methinks, and diligently flow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow;
Spreads its long arms amidst the wat'ry roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore;
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The flow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts:

But, view them cloſer, craft and fraud appear ;
 E'en liberty itſelf is barter'd here !
 At gold's ſuperior charms all freedom flies ;
 The needy ſell it, and the rich man buys :
 A land of tyrants, and a den of ſlaves,
 Here wretches ſeek diſhonourable graves ;
 And, calmly bent, to ſervitude conform,
 Dull as their lakes that ſlumber in the ſtorm.
 O ! how unlike their Belgic fires of old !
 Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold :
 War in each breaſt, and freedom on each brow :
 How much unlike the ſons of Britain now !

Fir'd at the ſound, my Genius ſpreads her wing,
 And flies where Britain courts the weſtern ſpring ;
 Where lawns extend that ſcorn Arcadian pride,
 And brighter ſtreams than ſam'd Hydaſpes glide.
 There all around the gentleſt breezes ſtray,
 There gentle muſic melts on ev'ry ſpray ;
 Creation's mildeſt charms are there combin'd ;
 Extremes are only in the maſter's mind !
 Stern o'er each boſom reaſon holds her ſtate,
 With daring aims irregularly great :
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
 I ſee the lords of human-kind paſs by ;
 Intent on high deſigns, a thoughtful band,
 By forms unfashion'd freſh from nature's hand ;
 Fierce in their native hardineſs of ſoul,
 True to imagin'd right, above controul ;
 While e'en the peaſant boaſts theſe rights to ſcan,
 And learns to venerate himſelf as man.
 Thine, freedom, thine the bleſſings pictur'd here,
 Thine are thoſe charms, that dazzle and endear :
 Too bleſt indeed were ſuch without alloy,
 But foſter'd e'en by freedom ills annoy.

That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ;
The self-dependant lordlings stand alone ;
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown.
Here, by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Repress'd ambition struggles round her shore ;
Till, over-wrought, the gen'ral system feels
Its motions stop, or phrensy fires the wheels.
Nor this the worst. As nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talents sink, and merit weeps unknown ;
Till time may come, when, stripp'd of all her charms,
The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame,
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die.

Yet think not thus, when freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great.
Ye pow'rs of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire !
And thou, fair freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel ;
Thou transitory flow'r, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fost'ring sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure ;
I only would repress them to secure ;
For just experience tells, in ev'ry foil,
That those who think must govern those who toil ;

And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
 Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each :
 Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
 Its double weight must ruin all below.
 O then, how blind to all that truth requires,
 Who think it freedom when a part aspires !
 Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
 Except when fast-approaching danger warms :
 But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
 Contracting regal pow'r to stretch their own ;
 When I behold a factious band agree
 To call it freedom when themselves are free ;
 Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
 Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law ;
 The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
 Pillag'd from slaves, to purchase slaves at home ;
 Fear, pity, justice, indignation, start,
 Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ;
 Till, half a patriot, half a coward grown,
 I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.
 Ah, brother ! how disastrous was that hour,
 When first ambition struck at regal pow'r ;
 And thus, polluting honour in its source,
 Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force !
 Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
 Her useful sons exchange'd for useless ore ;
 Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
 Like flaring tapers bright'ning as they waste ;
 Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
 Lead stern depopulation in her train ;
 And over fields, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
 In barren, solitary pomp repose ?
 Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
 The smiling long-frequented village fall ?

Beheld the duteous son, the fire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forc'd from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main ;
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound ?
E'en now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Thro' tangled forests, and thro' dang'rous ways ;
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murd'rous aim ;
There, while above the giddy-tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind !
Why have I stray'd from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows ?
In ev'ry government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure !
Still to ourselves in ev'ry place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find :
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy ;
The lifted ax, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damiens' bed of steel,
To men remote from pow'r but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

GOLDSMITH.

SECTION VII.

The vanity of human wishes.

LET observation, with extensive view,
 Survey mankind, from China to Peru;
 Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
 And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
 Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
 O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
 Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride,
 To tread the dreary paths without a guide,
 As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
 Shuns fancied ills, or chafes airy good:
 How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
 Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice:
 How nations sink by darling schemes oppress'd,
 When vengeance listens to the fool's request.
 Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
 Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
 With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,
 With fatal sweetness elocution flows;
 Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
 And restless fire precipitates on death.

But, scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
 Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
 Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
 And crowds with crimes the records of mankind!
 For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
 For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
 Wealth heap'd on wealth nor truth nor safety buys;
 The dangers gather as the treasures rise.

Let hist'ry tell, where rival kings command,
 And dubious title shakes the madden'd land,

When statues glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord.
Low sculks the hind beneath the rage of pow'r,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tow'r ;
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Tho' confiscation's vultures hover round.
The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy,
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy.
Now fears in dire vicissitude invade ;
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade :
Nor light nor darkness brings his pain relief,
One shows the plunder and one hides the thief.

Yet still one gen'ral cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales :
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival, and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth ;
See motley life in modern trappings drest,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest :
Thou who couldst laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece ;
Where wealth unlov'd without a mourner died ;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride ;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new made mayor's unwieldy state ;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
And senates heard before they judg'd a cause :
How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe !

Attentive, truth and nature to descry,
 And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,
 To thee were solemn toys or empty show,
 The robes of pleasure and the veils of wo :
 All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
 Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.
 Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
 Renew'd at ev'ry glance on human kind :
 How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
 Search ev'ry state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r.

Unnumber'd suppliants crowd preferment's gate,
 Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great ;
 Delusive fortune hears th' incessant call ;
 They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.
 On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
 Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
 Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
 Pours in the morning worshipper no more ;
 For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
 To growing wealth the dedicator flies ;
 From ev'ry room descends the painted face,
 That hung the bright palladium of the place ;
 And, smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
 To better features yields the frame of gold ;
 For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
 Heroic worth, benevolence divine :
 The form distorted justifies the fall,
 And detestation rids th' indignant wall.
 But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
 Sign her foes' doom, or guard her fav'rites' zeal ?
 Thro' freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
 Degrading nobles and controlling kings ;
 Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
 And ask no questions but the price of votes ;

With weekly libels and septennial ale,
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full blown dignity, see Wolfey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand :
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign,
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine ;
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows :
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r ;
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r ;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where-e'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliant's scorn him, and his followers fly :
Now drops at once the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolfey's wealth with Wolfey's end be thine ?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent ?
For why did Wolfey, near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight ?
Why but to sink, beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulfs below ?

What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life ?

What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
 By kings protected, and to kings ally'd ?
 What but their wish indulg'd in courts to shine,
 And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign ?

When first the college rolls receive his name,
 The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame :
 Resistless burns the fever of renown,
 Caught from the strong contagion of the gown :
 O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
 And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
 Are these thy views ? proceed, illustrious youth,
 And virtue guard thee to the throne of truth !
 Yet should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat,
 Till captive science yields her last retreat ;
 Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
 And pour on misty doubt resistless day ;
 Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,
 Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright ;
 Should tempting novelty thy cell refrain,
 And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain ;
 Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
 Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart ;
 Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
 Nor melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade ;
 Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
 Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee :
 Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
 And pause a while from learning, to be wise ;
 There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
 Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
 See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
 To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
 If dreams yet flatter once again attend,
 Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.

Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from foes;
See, when the vulgar 'scapes, despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds, tho' smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dang'rous parts he meets the flock,
And fatal learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let art and genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

SECTION VIII.

The same subject continued.

THE festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine:
This pow'r has praise, that virtue scarce can warm
Till fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet reason frowns on war's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name,
And mortgag'd states their grandfires wreath regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;
Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;

O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
 Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain:
 No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
 War founds the trump, he rushes to the field;
 Behold surrounding kings their pow'r combine,
 And one capitulate, and one resign;
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
 "Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought remain,
 "On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
 "And all be mine beneath the polar sky."

The march begins in military state,
 And nations on his eye suspended wait,
 Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
 And winter barricades the realms of frost;
 He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
 Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day!
 The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
 And shows his miseries in distant lands:
 Condemn'd a needy suppliant to wait,
 While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
 But did not chance at length her error mend?
 Did no subverted empire mark his end?
 D' I rival monarchs give the fatal wound,
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
 His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
 A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
 He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
 From Persia's tyrant, to Bavaria's lord.

In gay hostility, and barb'rous pride,
 With half mankind embattled at his side,
 Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
 And starves exhausted regions in his way;
 Attendant flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,

Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more ;
Fresh praise is tried till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind ;
New pow'rs are claim'd, new pow'rs are still bestow'd,
'Till rude resistance lops the spreading god ;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their vallies with the gaudy foe ;
Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains :
Th' encumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast
Through purple billows and a floating host.

The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarian pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway ;
Short sway ! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms ;
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise ;
The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
With all the sons of ravage crowd the war ;
The baffled prince, in honour's flatt'ring bloom
Of hasty greatness, finds the fatal doom,
His foes derision, and his subjects blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.

Enlarge my life with multitude of days,
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays ;
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy :
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r—
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more ;

They pall the tasteless meats, and joyless wines,
 And luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
 Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
 Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain :
 No sounds, alas ! would touch th' impervious ear,
 Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near ;
 Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'rs attend,
 Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend :
 But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
 Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
 The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest,
 Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest :
 While growing hopes scarce awe the gath'ring sneer,
 And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear ;
 The watchful guests still hint the last offence,
 The daughter's petulance, the son's expence ;
 Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
 And mould his passions till they make his will.
 Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
 Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade ;
 But unextinguish'd av'rice still remains,
 And dreaded losses aggravate his pains :
 He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
 His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands ;
 Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
 Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.

But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime
 Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime ;
 An age that melts with unperceiv'd decay,
 And glides in modest innocence away ;
 Whose peaceful day benevolence endears,
 Whose night congratulating conscience cheers ;
 The gen'ral fav'rite as the gen'ral friend :
 Such age there is, and who shall wish its end ?
 Yet e'en on this her load misfortune flings,
 To press the weary minutes flagging wings :

New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated friendship claims a tear.
Year chafes year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away :
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage ;
Till pitying nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.

But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulfs of fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise !
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.

The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face :
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring ;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom pleasure keeps too busy to be wise ;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolic, and the dance by night ;
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latest fashion of the heart ;
What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave ?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected virtue calls ;
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls ;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry rein,
And pride and prudence take her seat in vain.

To crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
 With harmless freedom, and the private friend.
 The guardians yield, by force superior ply'd,
 To int'rest, prudence ; and to flatt'ry, pride.
 Here beauty falls betray'd, despis'd, distrest ;
 And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.

Where then shall hope and fear their objects find ?
 Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind ?
 Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
 Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate ?
 Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
 No cries invoke the mercies of the skies ?
 Inquirer, cease ; petitions yet remain
 Which Heav'n may hear ; nor deem religion vain.
 Still raise for good the supplicating voice ;
 But leave to Heav'n the measure and the choice.
 Safe in his pow'r, whose eyes discern afar
 The secret ambush of a specious pray'r,
 Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
 Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
 Yet when the sense of Sacred Presence fires,
 And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
 Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
 Obedient passions, and a will resign'd ;
 For love, which scarce collective man can fill ;
 For patience, sov'reign o'er transmuted ill ;
 For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
 Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat :
 These goods for man the laws of Heav'n ordain,
 These goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain ;
 With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,
 And makes the happiness she does not find.

DR. JOHNSON.

The END.

John Gould & Co. 1852

Jan



say nothing to

and

Samuel B King

